

WESTERN INTERIOR ALASKA FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE
REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

PUBLIC MEETING

VOLUME I

Pike's Landing
Fairbanks, Alaska
October 10, 2017
9:04 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jack Reakoff, Chairman
Fred Alexie
Ray Collins
Timothy Gervais
Don Honea
Jenny Pelkola
Pollock Simon
Dennis Thomas
Darrel Vent

Regional Council Coordinator, Zach Stevenson

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S
2
3 (Fairbanks, Alaska - 10/10/2017)
4
5 (On record)
6
7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're going to bring
8 the Western Interior Regional Council meeting to order.
9 If I can have everybody sit down, we're going to start
10 the meeting. We're going to start the Western Interior
11 Regional Advisory Council meeting. We're at Pike's
12 Waterfront Lodge in Fairbanks. It's October 10th and
13 I've got 9:04 on my watch.
14
15 We have a modified agenda.
16
17 Does everybody have that, Zach?
18
19 MR. STEVENSON: Yes, sir.
20
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The one with the red
22 notations.
23
24 So the first agenda item is the
25 invocation.
26
27 Do you want to give us an invocation,
28 Ray.
29
30 MR. COLLINS: Okay.
31
32 (Invocation)
33
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Ray. I'll
35 call the meeting to order.
36
37 Roll call.
38
39 Jenny, do you want to give the roll.
40
41 MS. PELKOLA: Okay. Shirley Clark.
42
43 (No response)
44
45 MS. PELKOLA: Don Honea. Donald Honea.
46
47 MR. HONEA: Here.
48
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are you on the call,
50

1 Shirley? I want to make sure she's on the call.
2
3 (No response)
4
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Not yet. Go ahead.
6
7 MS. PELKOLA: Pollock Simon.
8
9 MR. SIMON: Here.
10
11 MS. PELKOLA: Raymond Collins.
12
13 MR. COLLINS: Here.
14
15 MS. PELKOLA: Jack Reakoff.
16
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Here.
18
19 MS. PELKOLA: Darrel Vent.
20
21 MR. VENT: Here.
22
23 MS. PELKOLA: Timothy Gervais.
24
25 MR. GERVAIS: Here.
26
27 MS. PELKOLA: Dennis Thomas.
28
29 MR. THOMAS: Here.
30
31 MS. PELKOLA: Jenny Pelkola. I'm here.
32 Fred Alexie.
33
34 MR. ALEXIE: Here.
35
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Jenny.
37 Welcome and introductions. There's lots of staff here
38 and I'd like to go around the room and give
39 introductions for who's attending the meeting.
40
41 So we'll start on this side.
42
43 Lisa.
44
45 MS. MAAS: Lisa Maas, wildlife
46 biologist in the Office of Subsistence Management.
47
48 MR. MATHEWS: Vince Mathews,
49 Subsistence Coordinator for Kanuti, Arctic and Yukon
50

1 Flats and Fairbanks.

2

3 MS. MICKLEY: Julia Mickley, Northern
4 Alaska Environmental Center. Water and mining
5 coordinator.

6

7 MR. SIMON: Jim Simon, private
8 anthropologist.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

11

12 MS. PETRIVELLI: Pat Petrivelli, Bureau
13 of Indian Affairs, subsistence anthropologist out of
14 Anchorage.

15

16 MS. DAMBERG: Carol Damberg.....

17

18 MR. DAVIS: Arlo Nasruk Davis, Northern
19 Alaska Environmental Center as the conservation
20 coordinator.

21

22 MS. LOR: My name is Socheata Lor. I'm
23 the Deputy Regional Chief of Refuges in Anchorage,
24 Alaska.

25

26 MS. DAMBERG: My name is Carol Damberg.
27 I'm the Regional Subsistence Coordinator out of
28 Anchorage.

29

30 MS. OKADA: Good morning. My name is
31 Marcy Okada. I'm a subsistence coordinator for Gates
32 of the Arctic National Wildlife Center.

33

34 MS. TRAINOR: Hello. My name is Alida
35 Trainor. I'm a Subsistence Resource Specialist in the
36 Division of Subsistence at Fish and Game here in
37 Fairbanks.

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: This fellow in the
40 front there.

41

42 MR. HASBROOK: Mark Hasbrook (ph) just
43 as an observer.

44

45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

46

47 MR. JOHNSON: Good morning, Mr. Chair.
48 Members of the Council. My name is Carl Johnson and
49 I'm the Council Coordination Division Chief with the

50

1 Office of Subsistence Management. Good to see you all
2 here.

3
4 MR. REAM: Good morning. I'm Joshua
5 Ream, anthropologist with the Office of Subsistence
6 Management.

7
8 MR. KEYSE: Matt Keyse. I'm with the
9 Subsistence Branch here in the Fairbanks Office, Fish
10 and Wildlife Service.

11
12 MS. JULIANUS: Good morning. Erin
13 Julianus, wildlife biologist for BLM Central Yukon
14 Field Office.

15
16 JASON: Jason (indiscernible), Central
17 Yukon BLM Field Office.

18
19 MS. PARKER MCNEILL: I'm Doreen Parker
20 McNeill. I'm with Fish and Game. I'm the management
21 coordinator for the Wildlife Division.

22
23 MS. CONITZ: Good morning. I'm Jan
24 Conitz. I'm with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service here
25 in Fairbanks with the Subsistence Division.

26
27 MS. RATTENBURY: Good morning. I'm
28 Kumi Rattenbury. I'm an ecologist with the National
29 Park Service and the Arctic Network Inventory
30 Monitoring Program.

31
32 MR. BUE: Good morning. Fred Bue, U.S.
33 Fish and Wildlife Service, fisheries manager.

34
35 MR. HAVENER: Good morning. Jeremy
36 Havener. I'm the Refuge Subsistence Coordinator for
37 Koyukuk, Nowitna and Innoko National Wildlife Refuges.

38
39 MR. HARRIS: Frank Harris, fish
40 biologist, Office of Subsistence Management.

41
42 MR. BOSCH: Good morning. I'm Brandon
43 Bosch. I'm a Federal Wildlife Officer for Fish and
44 Wildlife and also part time with the Park Service.

45
46 MR. SPINDLER: Mike Spindler, Refuge
47 Manager, Kanuti National Wildlife Refuge, based in
48 Fairbanks.

49
50

1 MR. MOOS: Kenton Moos. I'm the Refuge
2 Manager for Koyukuk, Nowitna and Innoko Refuges out of
3 Galena.

4
5 MR. STOUT: Glenn Stout, the Galena
6 area biologist for Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

7
8 MS. LONGSON: Sara Longson, the
9 assistant Galena area biologist for the Alaska
10 Department of Fish and Game.

11
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thank you.
13 Welcome to the meeting. We have a lot of agenda items
14 and a fairly full agenda. So review and adoption of the
15 agenda. Zach passed out the modified agenda. Does
16 anybody have any insertions into the agenda.

17
18 (No comments)

19
20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I wanted to see --
21 there's some statewide proposals. I would like to add
22 section 11(b) after our wildlife proposals -- oh,
23 statewide proposals here. That's already here. So I'd
24 like to see -- there's several different statewide
25 proposals that would affect our region and we should
26 comment on a few of those.

27
28 I would like to see a more thorough
29 update on the BLM RMP for Central Yukon and I want BLM
30 to have more of a broader -- that was a big issue in
31 our last meeting and I would like to see an update on
32 the Ambler Road Project because we're real gray on
33 what's actually going on with that. So those are items
34 that I would like to see further expanded or included
35 in the agenda.

36
37 Any other additions.

38
39 (No comments)

40
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Everybody's good
42 with the agenda.

43
44 MR. VENT: I'm good with it. I'd like
45 to comment on some of these proposals here too.

46
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. That's on
48 the agenda. So the Chair will entertain a motion to
49 adopt the agenda as modified.

50

1 MR. HONEA: Motion to adopt.

2
3 MS. PELKOLA: Second.

4
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those in favor of
6 the agenda as modified, signify by saying aye.

7
8 IN UNISON: Aye.

9
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed same sign.

11
12
13 (No opposing votes)

14
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Approval of the
16 previous minutes. Those are in the packet here.

17
18 MR. STEVENSON: Mr. Chair.

19
20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Zach.

21
22 MR. STEVENSON: We need to also provide
23 an opportunity for telephone introductions.

24
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, great. I was
26 reminded that -- is anybody on the phone? I've not
27 heard any beeping.

28
29 MS. CARROLL: Mr. Chair. This is Holly
30 Carroll, the Fish and Game Summer Season Area Manager.

31
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Holly.
33 Anybody else on there?

34
35 MR. BUTLER: Mr. Chair. You have Lem
36 Butler, Assistant Director for Wildlife Division in
37 Juneau.

38
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Welcome, Lem.

40
41 MR. BURCH: And Mark Burch, the Special
42 Projects Coordinator for the Division of Wildlife
43 Conservation in Palmer.

44
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Mark.

46
47 MS. STICKMAN: This is Danielle
48 Stickman, Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association,
49 Communication and Outreach Director.

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Say your name again.
2 I missed that one.

3
4 MS. STICKMAN: Danielle Stickman with
5 YRDFA.

6
7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any others.

8
9 MR. PERRY: Mr. Chair. This is Phillip
10 Perry. I'm the Management Coordinator for Region 5 for
11 the Western Arctic with Wildlife Conservation for Fish
12 and Game.

13
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thank you.

15
16 Any others.

17
18 MR. SHARP: Good morning, Jack. This
19 is Dan Sharp with Bureau of Land Management in
20 Anchorage.

21
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Dan, welcome.

23
24 MR. JOLY: Hello, Mr. Chairman. This
25 is Kyle Joly with the National Park Service.

26
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Kyle.

28
29 MR. MCKEE: Chris McKee, Wildlife
30 Division Chief, OSM.

31
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Morning, Chris. Did
33 we have somebody else join?

34
35 MR. AYERS: Good morning. This is
36 Scott Ayers, Fisheries, OSM.

37
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Scott.

39
40 MS. LAVINE: Good morning. This is
41 Robbin LaVine with the Office of Subsistence
42 Management.

43
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning,
45 Robbin.

46
47 MR. ESTENSEN: Good morning, Mr. Chair.
48 This is Jeff Estensen with the Alaska Department of
49 Fish and Game, Fall Season Manager here in Fairbanks.

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Jeff.

2

3

4 MS. KLOSTERMAN: Good morning, Chair.

5 This is Megan Klosterman with the Office of Subsistence
6 Management.

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Morning, Megan. Any
9 others.

10

11 (No comments)

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And I got a reminder
14 to push *6 to mute your phone in case there's
15 background noise. So welcome to the meeting those on
16 the phone. So we're viewing our minutes. Any
17 corrections or additional information that should be
18 put into the minutes.

19

20 MS. CARROLL: Mr. Chair. This is Holly
21 Carroll, Summer Season Manager for the Yukon.

22

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Holly.

24

25 MS. CARROLL: I don't have the adapted
26 new agenda in front of me, but I just wanted to offer
27 under the FRMP discussion of projects, former 11(b), I
28 would like to offer the ability to at least answer any
29 questions that the Council may have regarding any of
30 those projects and how we use them for management of
31 chinook and summer chum.

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We'll enjoy your
34 input into those. Thanks, Holly.

35

36 MS. CARROLL: Thank you very much.

37

38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The only correction
39 I see for the minutes we had under the BLM presentation
40 on Page 13 lapping to 14 Tim LaMarr had a lengthy
41 discussion that should be reflected in the minutes with
42 this Council.

43

44 Any other additions to the minutes.

45

46 (No comments)

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The Chair will
49 entertain a motion to adopt the minutes from last
50

1 spring's meeting.

2

3 MS. PELKOLA: So moved.

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Moved by Jenny.

6

7 MR. SIMON: Second.

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seconded by Pollock.

10 Those in favor of adoption of the agenda as modified
11 signify by saying aye.

12

13 IN UNISON: Aye.

14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed same sign.

16

17 (No opposing votes)

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Council Member
20 reports. We usually go around the room and people give
21 their reports for their area for the Council Members
22 and those in attendance. So, Jenny, you've got a nice
23 report for us on fishing.

24

25 MS. PELKOLA: I'm Jenny Pelkola and I'm
26 living in Galena at the time. I'm originally from
27 Koyukuk. Well, fishing was pretty good last summer. I
28 think everyone got to fish and they were satisfied. It
29 seems like there were more fish this year than I've
30 seen in the past, but I'm satisfied with what I got and
31 I've heard a lot of people say that they were happy
32 with what they got also. The weather cooperated pretty
33 well. We had a few rain spots here and there, but
34 other than that it was pretty good.

35

36 Moose season went well I think. We
37 didn't get our moose this year, but we got some meat
38 from a few people, so we're thankful for that.

39

40 I've been pretty busy with other
41 boards, traveling.

42

43 So I think that's all I would say right
44 now.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks,
47 Jenny.

48

49 Fred.

50

1 MR. ALEXIE: Good morning. My name is
2 Fred W. Alexie, Sr. from Kaltag. I'd like to report
3 that the king salmon season was very, very good this
4 year. We got the big kings. When I say big kings,
5 it's the 40-pound or better and that was the big
6 average. There was some smaller, but the average was
7 about 40 pounds. What that result in is we didn't have
8 to get as many fish that we normally get. Like my
9 family, we normally get 100 to 150, but I've got three
10 families I've got to feed out of that 150. This year I
11 only got 80 and that was plenty for all my families.

12
13 It was really good this year. This
14 year we had a commercial summer chum run which went
15 really good. Really good. A lot of drift, high water,
16 but a lot of those fishermen on the Yukon they make
17 booms to get the drift away from -- the drift running
18 into the wheel, so they did that and it alleviated a
19 lot of their problems.

20
21 What made it good our local people down
22 there depend on firefighting season only and that
23 commercial fishing in Kaltag. The fishermen from Galena
24 all the way down to Kaltag they hire a bunch of local
25 people, local kids. In the fish processing plant they
26 hire a whole bunch of kids from all the villages
27 between Galena and Kaltag. So that's an added income
28 for everybody down there.

29
30 Our moose season went well. I know
31 there's some proposals in our things there about
32 putting the season on later in September. I know of
33 one village that submitted one. I don't know if it's
34 still there. It was there. At any rate, the big moose
35 never came off the mountains until just a few days ago.
36 Oh, my gosh, there's some big moose on that river.
37 Big, 60-inch or better.

38
39 My grandson shot his first moose, 73.5-
40 inch, so I was very, very proud of him. We're going to
41 have a big dinner once I go home. Anyway, that wasn't
42 the only one, but there was a lot of 60-inchers coming
43 off the mountains. But that was toward the end of the
44 regular hunting season.

45
46 For our people's sake down there,
47 that's why I want to see more proposals about that game
48 change date so it's colder when we go out and the blue
49 flies, the bugs don't get at the meat and the warm
50

1 weather and the rain. Rain hit that moose, that meat
2 it spoils within a day or so, so we want to try to move
3 that hunting season later.

4
5 We're all experiencing climate change.
6 We've got to start dealing with that. Let's keep our
7 proposals in line with that, the climate change.

8
9 At any rate, that's the extent of my
10 report I'd like to make.

11
12 Thank you.

13
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Fred.

15
16 Pollock.

17
18 MR. SIMON: Pollock Simon from
19 Allakaket. Our fishing was good. There was a lot of
20 chum salmon, but didn't get much king salmon. When
21 king salmon was coming up the river, there was a lot of
22 rain. We had to pull the net because of a lot of
23 debris. We don't use fishwheel, we just use setnet and
24 it makes it kind of difficult for us when water raises
25 a lot of debris in the river and we have to pull the
26 net out or keep cleaning it.

27
28 There was a lot of chum salmon. I have
29 a 60-foot net and I have to release over half of it
30 because the net gets too much, over 100 salmon a day.
31 That's too much. People that have dogs are the ones
32 that fish for chum salmon pretty much. Since there was
33 a restriction on the salmon, king salmon, people don't
34 go to fish camp that much because the king salmon being
35 the main fish diet for our people. If they can't get
36 it, then they don't fish at all. Some of them don't
37 have a fish net.

38
39 Some years back we had a king net, 8-
40 inch and 7.5. Then the regulations changed to outlaw
41 that size and we went down to 6-inch, which we didn't
42 have. So the Fish and Game told us to surrender that
43 bigger net. Tanana Chiefs sent us 6-inch net, but
44 there's more restrictions. Once that king salmon is
45 passing, you pull the 6-inch and set 4-inch.

46
47 Well, I have all kinds of sizes of nets
48 because I have to feed a dozen dogs, so I have 4-inch
49 to set, but not everybody. Some of my neighbors don't
50

1 have -- they pull the 6-inch, they don't have no 4-inch
2 to set, so that was some kind of hardship for them, the
3 people that don't have net. When we have a regulation
4 change, we have to use a different net.

5
6 There wasn't that much moose moving, so
7 maybe people didn't -- some people didn't get their
8 moose, but like all the small communities somebody get
9 moose, your relatives, they share with you and give you
10 meat. Like Fred and Jenny said, there's global warming
11 in effect and moose is staying up in the hedge until it
12 start getting cold and they come down to the river.

13
14 When I left Allakaket yesterday, there
15 was the first sprinkle of snow, but it didn't stay and
16 I see it's still raining. I would support a later
17 season to go with the global warming like in rural
18 areas like Allakaket. There's no supermarket store.
19 We have to get our moose, go out and get our meat. If
20 the moose is not there, then it's kind of difficult for
21 a family. A long, cold winter ahead when won't get the
22 moose.

23
24 Around Allakaket area is 24B we didn't
25 get a caribou coming through for 10 years, so there's a
26 shortage of meat. But everybody shares their moose
27 meat with their family members.

28
29 Another thing to talk about, I know
30 Fred talked about this, is firefighting being the only
31 source of income for our young people in the village.
32 In state of Alaska there wasn't that many fires this
33 year because too wet, so that's kind of hard on the
34 young people. That's where they make their money,
35 firefighting, but luckily there was a lot of fires
36 Outside, the Lower 48. So the crew from Allakaket did
37 go Outside and made a little bit of money. One trip,
38 two-week stints.

39
40 It's kind of wet. I see it still
41 raining out there, but I'm glad to be here.

42
43 That's all.

44
45 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

46
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Pollock.

48
49 Darrel.

50

1 MR. VENT: Good morning, Chair. I had
2 a few things that I wanted to let people know what's
3 going on in our area. We have the same problem with
4 firefighting. I guess a lot of the uses for
5 firefighting is depending on State to send out their
6 resources and also getting the Lower 48 resources when
7 we have people available that did this their whole
8 life.

9
10 We were considered -- you know, back in
11 the '80s we were considered a Type 1 crew and then they
12 started saying, well, you need all these trainings.
13 When we were fighting those fires, we were fighting
14 right at the fire front. It wasn't, you know, just
15 standing there watching it go by like we have to do
16 now. No, we were there just fighting right alongside
17 the firefighters, but now it's different. They're
18 saying you have to go through all these trainings when
19 we already knew what the fires were about. Then they
20 said, no, you have to follow our regulations.

21
22 So that's some of the problems that
23 we're having issues with. I know that was brought up
24 in one of our subregional meetings. We're having
25 issues with all our people that's qualified for all
26 these jobs and it's kind of hurting us in the villages.
27 We have people who are qualified, but they have to have
28 a certain amount of paperwork in order to do it.

29
30 The thing with all this I think is that
31 we've got to start considering trying to help our
32 people in the villages because now we're getting back
33 fishing, but some of our people lost that traditional
34 knowledge of how to fish. It's taking some of the
35 elders to train them, but now we're losing all of our
36 elders, so it's harder for our younger ones to adapt to
37 how our people lived all these years.

38
39 They're starting to live more on the
40 school and it's providing more suicide rates. I mean
41 people are starting to think there's nowhere else for
42 them to go. Firefighting was rough this year, so I
43 know a lot of them are kind of in that depression zone
44 right now. It's just some things that we have to
45 consider how are we going to be surviving out there in
46 the villages. It's 80 percent or better unemployment.
47 I noticed people were talking about it, so I just had
48 to bring that up.

49
50

1 On our moose we did good this year. We
2 didn't have a lot of hunters because most of them were
3 coming up and they had a better season down in the
4 Lower Koyukuk area and the Yukon area. There was more
5 moose down there, so they didn't have to come up quite
6 a ways to do their hunting. Just the regular people
7 that like to go camping and hunting. They like some
8 areas around there, so they come back every year, so we
9 have those people that come up and go hunting.

10
11 It wasn't overpopulated this time. In
12 the years before we see a lot of boats going by and
13 when they go by we have a hard time catching our moose.
14 I spent probably 1,400 just trying to catch moose last
15 year and I didn't catch a moose. This year I spent 3-
16 400. I'm happy, I got a moose, so I got something to
17 eat this year.

18
19 Talking about climate change. We're
20 worried because our moose meat when we're drying it
21 it's not drying. Not like it does when it's a little
22 cooler and the right kind of drying temperature so our
23 meat doesn't quite -- dried meat doesn't quite taste
24 the same. It takes a little longer, starts turning
25 white. I noticed people are talking about that. They
26 say maybe it's because the weather is not right.

27
28 So I want to talk about climate change.
29 You know, that's some things that are affecting us in
30 the villages and the meat is starting to spoil faster
31 so we're losing meat. We have to put that meat away
32 right away. Takes two days to put it away and I see
33 some people still traveling the river four days and
34 that meat is pretty much done on the outside. I don't
35 know what it looks like on the inside.

36
37 The weather is not cooperating no more.
38 It's something that we're going to have to probably
39 consider. I think there's a lot of issues there.
40 There's a lot of people that want to consider the
41 weather. That's something I think we're going to have
42 to eventually look into later on down the years.

43
44 This year we had more bears in the
45 village than previous. We had one black and five other
46 bears. We had to get rid of four of them so far and
47 there's still two more out there hanging around there
48 by the dump and just -- they come in the nighttime and
49 they come right to the edge of the villages, so our

50

1 kids can't go out. We have to really be careful.
2 There's more bears than usual. There's something going
3 on there. I don't know what it is, but they're
4 starting to hang around our village. We didn't really
5 see a lot of that maybe five, ten years ago, but now
6 from then on we started seeing more and more activity.

7
8 There's something going on that's
9 making the bears starting to move in toward the
10 villages. Hopefully something can be looked into and
11 see what's causing them to come around our area. We
12 never had to deal with them before. I remember when I
13 was a little kid that we used to go out. All we
14 brought was a .22 or a shotgun. Now we have to carry a
15 rifle as soon as we step out the door. It's a whole
16 lot different story. So something is going on there.
17 The bears are starting to move. So just putting that
18 out there.

19
20 Thank you.

21
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do you have a bad
23 berry year down there?

24
25 MR. VENT: No, people were catching
26 them.

27
28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I mean the berries.

29
30 MR. VENT: Oh, the berries. It was
31 more closer to the village, so maybe that might have
32 been one of the reasons why they were coming. Plus all
33 the bones and stuff that people throw away, like the
34 moose heads and stuff after they cut everything off
35 there. They put them down there next to -- they've got
36 an area where they keep everything there and that's why
37 the bears are coming around there maybe too.

38
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah. The berry
40 crop where I live was real poor.

41
42 Ray.

43
44 MR. COLLINS: Speaking of berries,
45 yeah, it was a poor year, but fortunately we had a
46 really abundant year the year before, so we put up over
47 30 gallons in the freezer. So that will carry us
48 through this winter even though we didn't get as many.
49 But the cranberries were good. So that was all right.

50

1 In terms of the salmon, especially the
2 kings, we've had early closures downriver so they don't
3 open it up for kings down there and it's really made a
4 difference in the headwaters. We've got a weir now in
5 the Salmon River, which is one of the more productive
6 streams in the headwaters. Before at the best they
7 estimated about 2,000 a year escapement. It jumped up
8 to 6,400 and 6,800.

9
10 I don't have the figure this year, but
11 it was something comparable to that. So about three
12 years we've had a real jump, almost three times the
13 escapement, that we were getting before. So if we can
14 continue that for a couple more years when we get those
15 four and five-year-olds coming back from those spawning
16 we should see even more gains up there.

17
18 But it caused a price down in the
19 Bethel area because they like that early drying weather
20 down there, so they've had to hold off before and they
21 were more limited in kings down there. The actual
22 numbers coming into the river were lower. So the jump
23 we're getting is off of poor years in terms of runs
24 even by giving them protection as they come up the
25 river. So that's a positive thing.

26
27 And they did open it up up in the
28 McGrath area there. We were able to take kings there.
29 But those heading further upstream actually go right by
30 McGrath. We can't drift up there because of the snags,
31 so we have to use setnet only. So they got some kings
32 at McGrath, but not a lot still because those ones, as
33 I mentioned, they go right by up the middle of the
34 river. Down below they were catching by drifting and
35 so they opened that early. They'll knock that
36 population down again. So we're hoping we can keep
37 that closure early on.

38
39 In terms of moose, the State's efforts
40 out there to reduce bears they had to -- as you know,
41 for about five years we closed the area about 20 miles
42 around McGrath and made an experimental moose
43 management area. They had different terms for it. And
44 you had to get a permit before season before you could
45 hunt in the rest of the area around there. Well, we've
46 opened it up now. It's been open for about three years
47 now. The population of young cows has really increased
48 with the reduction in the mortality on the young ones.
49 We weren't getting calf survival. So that was a
50

1 positive effort on the State. Most of the harvest in
2 younger bulls.

3
4 Like as mentioned in other places, some
5 of the bigger bulls don't come in until later down to
6 the river. They're back in the hills. But we do have
7 it open through the 25th there now, so that helps some
8 later in the season. I personally didn't get a moose
9 this year. I missed two opportunities, but we were
10 given half a moose. Everybody that needed meat got it
11 in McGrath pretty well.

12
13 Same is true I think up in Nikolai
14 above. They did okay also. So there's been a
15 turnaround in the moose numbers. We've got a good
16 breeding population out there. But the bears are
17 starting to increase right along with it. So far they
18 can -- we're still getting enough survival of calves to
19 keep the population growing for a little while.

20
21 I guess that's about all I have to
22 report that's pertinent.

23
24 Thank you.

25
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Ray.

27
28 Go ahead, Tim.

29
30 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Chairman
31 Reakoff. Timothy Gervais. Yeah, the salmon harvest in
32 the Ruby region was really good. Seemed like everybody
33 had their needs met. It was good on abundance and good
34 on quality. Actually there was so much fish that some
35 people expressed some concern that it wasn't all being
36 -- everything that was being caught wasn't being
37 processed as good as it could be because of just too
38 much abundance.

39
40 We also had a summer visit by ADF&G
41 Commissioner Cotten came down to discuss salmon
42 management with the village and that was really good
43 outreach on the Department of Fish and Game's part. So
44 we appreciate that.

45
46 King salmon abundance wasn't great all
47 over the state. There was not that strong of a run in
48 the Kuskokwim. The Nushagak, which is Bristol Bay's
49 main king salmon river, was extremely weak on king

50

1 salmon. I believe it was late July or early August
2 Department of Fish and Game actually had a closure on
3 all king salmon retention on Southeast Alaska.

4
5 As this Council has been focused on the
6 salmon issue for several decades now, we're seeing that
7 it's really -- even with all the experience of the
8 managers and experience of the users it's still --
9 fisheries management, game management, it's just
10 something that's not all -- can't be said this is
11 happening because of this and that, because of that.

12
13 So I feel like as we go forward in our
14 policy recommendations and stuff like that remember --
15 you hear terms best available science and management
16 according to science, but with the fish it's really
17 hard to understand how the complexities of the river
18 and the ocean systems. So I think it's good to err on
19 the side of conversation and allow the resource to be
20 able to reproduce and keep the resource sustainable.

21
22 Also an interesting development I'm
23 seeing down in Ruby is there's more fishermen switching
24 over to drift gillnet gear, which is something I've
25 been pretty slow for quite a while. As people are
26 learning, they're getting less bycatch of pike and
27 whitefish by doing drift fishing. So you're seeing a
28 shift in harvest technique.

29
30 I think that plays into where we see
31 these new gear types being allowed on the lower river
32 for salmon and some of the managers saying, well,
33 there's not that many fishermen doing and stuff like
34 that. You see now where the resource -- or when a
35 harvest technique is effective or efficient on time or
36 fuel that the fishermen will adopt into it and have to
37 be careful not to allow too much harvesting power so
38 that affects the manager's ability to control the
39 harvest.

40
41 Gulf of Alaska bottom trawlers are
42 starting to complain pretty loudly about having to work
43 around king salmon catch throughout the year. They're
44 saying it's impacting their ability to meet their
45 market. So we'll have to just keep track of that
46 discussion and realizing that there's these issues that
47 mostly take place in North Pacific Management Council
48 venue. For king salmon caps they do have economic
49 impact to the industrial fishing sector. We have to

50

1 realize that when it affects their business revenue,
2 then they're going to push back and lobby hard to get
3 the restrictions changed or modified.

4
5 This summer I heard a radio story that
6 the National Park Service had won a court case or an
7 appeal regarding a fellow that was operating a jet boat
8 on the Nation River in Yukon-Charley Preserve and the
9 court had ruled in favor of the National Park Service.
10 That's a case that's dealing with -- I guess it would
11 be jurisdiction on who can regulate stuff, so that
12 doesn't really affect us exactly, but that sets a court
13 precedence for National Park Service being able to have
14 their rulemaking effect the way the hunter was
15 operating.

16
17 The Ruby Tribe is submitting a grant,
18 Tom Seton, to bring another 12 or 15 wood bison into
19 the Ruby region. That's in the pretty early stages,
20 but there's some work being done to try and bring in
21 more bison from the Wildlife Rehabilitation Center
22 there at Portage/Girdwood.

23
24 I'd like Council Member Honea to talk
25 about some work he's doing with bringing some reindeer
26 into the Ruby area also during this report.

27
28 On moose, even though it was warm, wet
29 weather, there was a lot of harvest. Potentially
30 record harvest for our community. So there's no
31 shortage of moose anywhere in the community. Some
32 community members are concerned with overharvest. Two
33 or three moose per household type situation. People
34 had talked about trying to limit the number of moose
35 per household, but it's a pretty hard thing to manage.
36 I think it's better managed by just good communication
37 and good sharing and cooperation in the community.

38
39 We had a little bit of wanton waste
40 issue with some sport harvested meat coming out of
41 Melozi. The meat was donated to some people in Ruby
42 and it went bad a day after they had received it and it
43 ended up in a Ruby dump.

44
45 I'd like to personally thank Alaska
46 Department of Fish and Game and the Nowitna Refuge for
47 doing a really great job on the moose management in our
48 area. It's real significant for the community to be
49 able to have great harvest opportunity and success like
50

1 they did this year. So I appreciate all your hard work
2 and good results.

3
4 It's kind of an interesting situation.
5 Like normally if you had a late season moose this year,
6 you could have some quarters hang and butcher them in
7 the winter, later spring, whenever you needed the meat,
8 but with this warm, overcast weather nothing kept that
9 well and everybody had to either can or freeze all
10 their meat. There's not -- the weather is too warm to
11 have anything hanging.

12
13 And then starting to be some concern
14 from some community members that subsistence hunters
15 are targeting large moose not specifically late season,
16 but some of them came in late season, which wouldn't be
17 traditional harvest of big moose late season due to
18 quality of meat. The allowable sale of antlers it
19 seems that some members of the community are starting
20 to target big moose for the benefit of being able to
21 sell those antlers when the antler buyer comes down the
22 river.

23
24 So that's been a cause of concern
25 that's kind of more highlighted this year with so many
26 moose. We just have to keep an eye on it as a
27 community and make sure subsistence stays about meat
28 and food harvest and not about selling antlers.

29
30 I'd like to thank everybody for
31 attending our meeting.

32
33 It's good to see everyone.

34
35 Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

36
37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Tim.

38
39 Dennis.

40
41 MR. THOMAS: Dennis Thomas, Crooked
42 Creek. Our king salmon this year was pretty good.
43 Everybody that wanted some got some. For ourselves
44 there's four families that we work together. Our
45 family and then I've got two sons and a daughter that
46 all have families, so we all work together, but we got
47 our dry fish up. We also were able to freeze a few
48 kings, which we haven't been able to much in the past.
49 We've got to use it up. So that was pretty good.

50

1 And then the reds were exceptionally
2 good this year compared to what we've had in the past.
3 I know we'd like to eat those fresh because they're
4 good and also to bake the mamothluks (ph), whatever the
5 hell they call them. I can't even pronounce the word,
6 but they're really great out of the reds.

7
8 The chum salmon as usual for our area
9 was pretty good. A lot of times we get more than we
10 want. You're out there and start doing your fish and
11 all of a sudden you've got a big pile of those in, but
12 it works out. We made a lot of strips out of them this
13 year and stuff. So it gets kind of dry and that, but
14 it's good. The taste of them are good.

15
16 As far as getting people to catch them,
17 like I say, I've got a wife and I got a daughter and
18 I've got three or four granddaughters running around
19 there to cut them up. We have a lot of young men that
20 want to go out and drift. They don't want to cut them,
21 but they don't mind going out and drift the fish. So
22 that works out well for us.

23
24 But the whole village did well on it
25 this year. The silvers have always been good, but we
26 don't drift for those so much. We got out with a stick
27 to get them. A stick fish, whatever you want to call
28 it, you know, and that works well.

29
30 The moose were good this year.
31 Everybody in the village that wanted some got some.
32 With the Federal thing going and you've got to get
33 permission and all this, it works well for us. I don't
34 hunt anymore. I can't even hardly walk up the bank.
35 But I've got two sons. I've got one older. He just
36 loves to go out and whack 'em and he always gets 'em.
37 He's really a good hunter. He was a guide for a while.

38
39 But we haven't gotten any caribou for
40 years and I hope that that caribou herd starts -- keeps
41 growing and eventually their path back up through us.
42 Years ago I could shoot them off my front porch if I
43 wanted, you know. One year there was two bunches of
44 them wanting to cross the river there with the ice
45 running. A pack of wolves up here and a pack of wolves
46 down here and they'd run up there and they'd run down
47 there. Finally they crossed during the night when the
48 ice was running in the river because of such a pressure
49 from wolves on them, you know.

50

1 But that doesn't seem to be so heavy.
2 We do have them around, but they sure aren't as
3 noticeable. For a while they were coming to the
4 village and killing the dogs and all that.

5
6 Now upriver out of Sleetmute for a
7 couple years, I think it was two or three years ago,
8 the Fish and Game was up there shooting bears out of
9 helicopters. They got 70-80 bear a year up there for
10 the two years that I remember. A few of them were
11 brown bears too. But I don't know whether that's
12 helped the moose or what it is. Whatever it is it's
13 working. Our moose is coming back. It's a doable
14 thing. So it isn't such a hit and miss.

15
16 Not only that years ago -- not that
17 many years ago all the people from downriver come up to
18 our area to go hunting. Anywhere from all the way up
19 to McGrath and beyond that. At the store there I used
20 to have 50-60 boats a day coming through there buying
21 gas and stuff from me. It was really really a busy
22 season. Now two or three a day maybe. A lot of that
23 is it was a dollar or two a gallon of gas, it's seven,
24 eight, nine dollars a gallon for gas. I think that
25 kills a hell of a lot of it.
26 Nonetheless we're doing pretty good in our area.

27
28 Firefighting. We haven't had
29 firefighting coming to our village for 40 years or
30 better. So if you get any at all you're damn lucky.
31 Now we had some firefighters in the village this year,
32 but they were from Kenai and they were from the Yukon
33 and whatever. They get teams of these people get
34 together and most of the Native people, locals and
35 they're good kids. They're working like everybody
36 else.

37
38 So I had a couple guys hired out of the
39 village to get water and do this kind of thing, but as
40 far as the economy of Crooked Creek it doesn't do
41 anything. It doesn't do any good for the stores either
42 if they come in or not because these guys bring
43 everything in.

44
45 Now years ago we had two years in a row
46 we had fires up there right by the village. We had six
47 crews there at one time parked all over the place.
48 They bought everything through the store. Those were
49 the best years I ever had. They were renting boats,
50

1 they were renting this, they were renting that, they
2 were renting this building. One group would rent the
3 front of the building and the other group would rent
4 the rear of the building. I mean it was really great.
5 Hell, I could take that every year. The money was good,
6 you know.

7
8 Again, it didn't help the local people
9 work because they weren't getting any of the local
10 teams in there. When we first got there 45 years ago
11 they did take crews out of there every year and then
12 all of a sudden, boom, they stopped it. We haven't had
13 a crew there in 43-44 years. That's not a viable thing
14 for us.

15
16 As far as commercial fishing, we're
17 never had it upriver.
18 Kalskag had some and on down. I don't know what
19 they're doing there now. With the king salmon
20 commercial fishing down there getting chopped down, boy
21 it's really -- that just as much as anything has made a
22 big difference with us. And it's really good. You go
23 out there. Instead of getting a couple, three kings
24 for the whole summer, you're getting a couple of drifts
25 sometimes. Like I said, last year we were able to
26 freeze some of these things. They're quite abundant,
27 you know.

28
29 I hope it doesn't change whatever
30 they're doing down there. The thing people got to
31 remember -- you go back east, like you go back to
32 Pennsylvania, we were up to Harrisburg there for a few
33 years doing a sports show. That town is shut down.
34 You've got a mile of these big steel mills shut down.
35 The industry changes. Now maybe some of this
36 commercial fishing maybe it isn't what it used to be.
37 Maybe these people are going to have to start looking
38 for something different also. Things change.

39
40 How many people are leaving the Bush to
41 go to Anchorage. No income back there. They go to
42 town, some of them could get a job. I would hope that
43 they come back. Right now -- years ago when I was on
44 the school board, we had over 500 kids in the school
45 district. When I left the school district, we had 340.
46 That's 40 percent loss. People moving to town, you
47 know.

48
49 So what's the answer back there. I
50

1 like living there. I love it. I don't want to live
2 anywhere else. I've got my dish, I can watch my
3 football, my baseball and all this. I don't care about
4 anything else really. I get my fish, my son gets my
5 moose. Hell, I live pretty nice, you know.
6

7 The whole world is changing. We're
8 changing. And this is the kind of thing I guess we're
9 trying to do here, to keep up with the times and try to
10 make it where it's a viable place to live. Sometimes
11 you've got to do a little push. Sometimes you get
12 irritated.
13

14 I remember my wife was on the Kuskokwim
15 fishing thing down there. Boy, she'd be on the phone
16 for hours here and there. Oh, we're not going to do
17 it. We're not going to have any commercial openings
18 down here. They hang up the phone. An hour later, oh,
19 yeah, they're going to have a commercial opening down
20 there and irritate everybody that spent hours listening
21 to this crap and trying to do something about it, you
22 know.
23

24 Okay, who opens it up. Is this the
25 State, the Feds, whoever it is. This is where we're
26 getting to them. It's working, Jack. It's working.
27 We are making some progress.
28

29 Just like that road to Ambler. I hope
30 to hell it doesn't go because you're going to ruin an
31 awful lot of country up there. Maybe I'm a treehugger,
32 whatever you want to call it. I don't know. All I
33 know is I see what it does for the area, you know.
34

35 Now we've got that mine going in up
36 above Crooked, 8-10 miles up the creek. So far it
37 hasn't had an impact on the village. It hasn't
38 affected our water supply coming down the creek or
39 anything like this. They've been up there, what, 15-20
40 years now dinking around and they're still up there.
41 Right now they're doing a little work. They eventually
42 may make that a big mine. Maybe they'll spoil the
43 creek a little bit. I don't know.
44

45 All I know is as of right now they're
46 doing everything that's possible to avoid that. Now at
47 one time we had 23 people in the village of Crooked
48 Creek working up there and that's out of 100 and some
49 people. That's pretty good. That helps a lot. Now
50

1 what do we got. I think they got a couple three out of
2 the village up there now doing something.

3
4 A lot of that isn't the Donlin Gold
5 outfit. They subbed this out. Okay, we need a
6 contract. You tell us what you're going to do. So
7 they're hiring their own crews, rather than when Donlin
8 was there they were hiring local people. This was
9 really, really work. The head people with the mine
10 were at our place at Crooked there, the lodge. This is
11 where the guys that run it, the president, the vice
12 president, the big wheels.

13
14 They wonder how come this works here in
15 this place and this is the only place in the world that
16 we work this well with the local people. They give
17 them jobs, they give them opportunities, they give them
18 the responsibility and you got it. They made
19 management out of these people and all this kind of
20 thing.

21
22 Again, these people that live in the
23 Bush they know how to get things done. It's what
24 you've had to do your whole life, you know. I just
25 hope good things come of it. I don't know what the
26 hell is going to happen to Pebble. I don't know yet.
27 Everybody says it's bad, then other people say it's
28 good. Goodness, I don't know. That would be a big
29 operation. That would employ a lot of people.

30
31 But look at the Red Dog. They got that
32 whole road to haul it to the beach. They see all the
33 things dying around that from all the dust kicking up.
34 I don't know. But I know the State sometimes they're
35 not too honest with the people there and they don't
36 really care about what's happening in the Bush
37 sometimes.

38
39 So I hope that what little we can do
40 here, if anything at all, is going to be good for the
41 people. I hope we make the right decisions here and
42 that we could get to the people to do something. If we
43 try it, what the hell is wrong. Try it. If it don't
44 work, it doesn't work. Okay. We could always rescind
45 it and do something else, you know. But you've got to
46 be out there and have the guts to do it. That's all I
47 can say, you know.

48
49 Just like old Murkowski when he was in
50

1 there, he cut off the senior money. I sure didn't like
2 that, you know. Whether it's right or not, I don't
3 know, but it sure would be nice to get an extra \$250 a
4 month now that I'm a senior.

5
6 Anyway, I gabbed here too much.

7
8 Enough.

9
10 Thank you.

11
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Dennis.

13
14 Don.

15
16 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Don
17 Honea, Jr. of Ruby. Maybe I'm just going to kind of
18 echo what Tim and Jenny -- fishing on the Yukon, like
19 Fred said, was excellent this year. We, as a family,
20 two of us we only caught 30 fish, 30 kings, but that
21 was sufficient. That was sufficient. You know, we
22 were just really happy with that. You know, I don't go
23 into a hundred numbers, those kind of numbers and
24 stuff.

25
26 My train of thought is if the king
27 salmon wasn't good, you always got a million chums or
28 something coming up the river later and we utilize
29 those. You have to use what's there. I often found
30 that, hey, summer chums, God, they were so rich, they
31 were so oily. They were almost as oily as the kings.
32 So, hey, we just learn to use what we have.

33
34 I was really confused. I thought this
35 was a fishing year and I think maybe OSM could help me
36 or give us kind of a chronological thing here where we
37 are. We're looking at some of the proposals, the
38 hunting and fishing, that were submitted in March. Mr.
39 Chair, tell me. You know, it's really kind of
40 confusing.

41
42 We had a tribal meeting a couple days
43 ago and someone on the council asked me what year we
44 are. I thought we were in a fishing cycle year and
45 Jack says it's two years or something. I could never
46 understand that. So I guess the village next to me,
47 Loudon, put in a fishing proposal and I think probably
48 that's coming up in February, January. I don't know
49 exactly the timeline. I wish we could have a timeline
50

1 kind of a thing to look at so we can plan accordingly
2 and submit our proposals accordingly.
3

4 These guys over from the Kusko, Ray and
5 Dennis here, we need input from every one of our
6 region. Our region is so vast. We have proposals on
7 here about caribou. We have some crossover proposals.
8 I don't know a thing about it. I'm relying on them.
9 That's where the expertise of Carl Morgan and those
10 guys come in. So I think that in the future we should
11 somehow get the word out there that each region is
12 represented equally because I'm not going to be able to
13 vote on something that I don't know about. I don't
14 know the numbers. I don't know what the Mulchatna
15 Caribou Herd is doing.
16

17 Other than that, Tim brings up
18 interesting points. And Ruby is really unique. When
19 we talk about taking some of the breeding bulls there
20 off of the road, we're not talking about Federal lands.
21 That's an RM-38. That's a State registration hunt.
22 When people are taking 60-inch bulls out there, two per
23 family, there's something wrong and not sharing. So I
24 think we discussed that as a tribe, but we thought Ruby
25 AC would be better able to do that. We as a tribe do
26 not want to mix politics in our hunting and fishing and
27 I think it wise. So anyway that's going to come up.
28

29 Also Tim mentioned and he probably
30 wanted me to expound on the reindeer and the bison.
31 We, as a tribe, are trying to be proactive and bringing
32 in -- whether it's bison, bison would be great, or
33 reindeer. Incidentally, we're going to meet with I think
34 mid-November Ruby and Stevens Village right here in
35 Fairbanks to speak on that. Either one of them I just
36 think it's great that we have a viable food source
37 that's sustainable, that we could put out there. I
38 think the future looks good for that.
39

40 If your tribe has a chance to do that,
41 by all means. I mean I'm just excited for the GASH
42 area. If that area succeeds, if that bison popular
43 down there because it's a healthy, really good meat.
44

45 Other than that it's good to be here.
46 I've missed a couple meetings. When we meet again, I
47 realize this is at the end of our meeting, I'd like to
48 see us be able to meet in Galena. We can fix the phone
49 business, stuff like that. I just think it's nice to
50

1 be able to come in here.

2
3 I also had kind of an idea and I spoke
4 to Carl this morning about it from OSM. I think that
5 maybe sometimes we could sit down and discuss some of
6 the options of getting us to meetings, whether it's
7 what to charter like in the past or weighing the
8 options. I mean is it cost effective to bring us to --
9 say if we had a meeting in McGrath, is it cost
10 effective to bring us into Fairbanks, bring us into
11 Anchorage, overnight there, and then over there.

12
13 The old way where we had a charter and
14 we just went around a circuit and picked up people.
15 Maybe that's a point of discussion or maybe not.
16 Anyway, I just wanted to see if we could weigh the
17 options there and if we as Council Members had any
18 input into that.

19
20 Thank you.

21
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Don.

23
24 MS. PELKOLA: Mr. Chair.

25
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Jenny.

27
28 MS. PELKOLA: Sorry, but when I gave my
29 report I'm just a little bit under the weather today.
30 I'd just like to for the record the subregions in our
31 area were very disappointed that the meeting was not
32 held in Galena and that would be the village of Kaltag,
33 Nulato, Koyukuk, Huslia, Ruby and Galena.

34
35 TCC offered their equipment, whatever
36 we needed for our meetings. I was supposed to look
37 into that, but I was unable to because I had a death in
38 the family and I had to leave Galena. But just for
39 future meetings just to let you know that the people
40 were very disappointed because there was going to be
41 representatives from the other villages coming in with
42 concerns.

43
44 Also I'd like to say that last week on
45 Friday the First Chiefs met with BLM regarding
46 employment and hiring practices in our area. TCC was
47 there and all the First Chiefs from the subregion were
48 there. We had a long discussion on that, so hopefully
49 a lot of the issues will be worked out somehow.

50

1 I think that's about all I have to say,
2 but right now I'm just not feeling very well and I'm
3 going to try to make it today.

4
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks,
6 Jenny.

7
8 Go ahead, Zach.

9
10 MR. STEVENSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
11 By way of context, in mid June of this summer, a call
12 was put in to the Native Village of Louden just to
13 address the issue of the possibility of having the
14 meeting there. It came to the attention of the Office
15 of Subsistence Management that the Council did not have
16 access to an analog landline, which is required for us
17 to transcribe and record the meeting. At which point
18 we were required to make a decision as to where to hold
19 the meeting.

20
21 At that point there was a fisheries
22 issue going on in region that brought the attention of
23 the State of Alaska and the Governor's Office and it
24 came to our attention that that was occupying the
25 attention of the council of Louden so they were
26 focusing on that fisheries issue.

27
28 After that point, having to secure a
29 location for the meeting, particularly one that could
30 accommodate the analog landline, the decision was made
31 that we would hold the meeting here in Fairbanks.
32 After Fairbanks was selected later in the summer, it
33 came to our attention that Galena could accommodate the
34 line, but at that point we'd already secured this
35 venue.

36
37 Consequently, three additional calls
38 were made to the Council because it became evident that
39 the Council was concerned that individuals were welcome
40 at this meeting and wanting to share input. While
41 those calls were not returned, messages were left with
42 the Council to inform them that the Louden Council and
43 for that matter all members of the public were welcome
44 and invited to attend this meeting.

45
46 It's certainly our intent to get back
47 out to Galena in the future, which we expressed our
48 desire to get back out there, assuming we can resolve
49 those technology issues. Again, it's our hope that
50

1 this forum and its public format, both here and in
2 Fairbanks and via our teleconference, provides an
3 opportunity for all members of the public who have
4 comments to share to be able to do so.

5
6 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Zach.

9
10 Darrel.

11
12 MR. VENT: Sorry, I forgot to mention,
13 you know, that our area depends mostly on summer chum
14 and silver. We're looking into seeing that -- they're
15 starting to have commercial on it that kind of makes us
16 worried about what happened with the king salmon once
17 you start putting commercial on there. Hopefully they
18 learn from previous years that they got to take care of
19 this fish. Otherwise there's not going to be no money
20 involved and it's going to take the money out of it
21 again.

22
23 So just to let them be aware that we
24 depend on this fish, the summer chum and the silvers.
25 We don't hardly use the king salmon. So that's our
26 point of view there.

27
28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Darrel. My
29 question for Don and Tim is really high harvest in
30 Ruby. Was that mostly on the road or was that mostly
31 just moose in general. Don.

32
33 MR. HONEA: Yeah, I could answer that.
34 I guess when I say it's unique because we've got 40
35 miles of road going one way and that thing is heavily
36 trafficked during hunting season and that's where
37 you're going to find -- you know, mostly you take a
38 typical village. They don't have roads. Everybody
39 down there has a truck of some sort. A lot of vehicles
40 for such a little place and everybody is on that road
41 and therein kind of lies the problem. It's unique.

42
43 I mean like I said you don't in any
44 other village see a lot of women out on the road
45 hunting or I mean hunting period because of the road
46 system. So it creates that kind of a -- and it's a
47 State hunt I'm talking about, so I think that we're
48 going to have to submit as the Ruby AC some kind of
49 measures. You know, I hate to open a can of worms and
50

1 say, you know, one per household, but that's where it
2 may go.

3
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. Well,
5 moose were high this year and that road is high, so
6 that's probably why the harvest was up. Some years
7 they might drop to lower elevations. I was going to
8 give my report.

9
10 When we met last spring here in
11 Fairbanks the Board of Game was in session and at that
12 time I had big concerns for the Central Arctic Caribou
13 Herd. The Koyukuk River Advisory Committee was urging
14 restrictions on cow caribou harvest, in particular
15 myself.

16
17 The Board closed cow caribou hunting in
18 26B Southeast, which helped a whole bunch. Last year
19 they killed 200 and some cow caribou. This year there
20 was supposed to be zero cow caribou harvested in that
21 lower part. That's where the road hunters are hunting.

22
23 There were several caribou that were
24 seized by enforcement. Guys were shooting cow caribou.
25 They didn't know a cow caribou from a bull caribou.
26 They didn't pay attention to the reg book that explains
27 specifically how to tell the differences. But not
28 nearly as many cow caribou were killed. That herd fell
29 from 68,000 down to 22,600.

30
31 I got an email from Beth Lenart, the
32 area biologist. She says they did a digital photo
33 census. They're seeing more caribou mainly because of
34 the digital photography. Reproduction has been good
35 the last two or three years. So we need to conserve
36 cow caribou. The Board did that, so I was real happy
37 that the Board of Game closed cow caribou hunting
38 there.

39
40 One of the calculations that was not
41 made in the analysis on harvest is the wound loss rate
42 with caribou. Caribou have a really high wound loss
43 rate. They're an open terrain animal, they're a
44 herding animal. People shooting at long range into
45 herds bad things happen. So there's no real
46 calculation, no enumeration of that wound loss rate.

47
48 I had a biologist at the Department
49 tell me that they felt there could be easily a 30
50

1 percent wound loss rate. When Tim. Osborn on the
2 Koyukuk asked hunters how many moose they wounded at
3 the check station in Ellis Cabin -- that was back in
4 the '80s, wasn't it, Glenn? He found that 15 percent
5 of the hunters had wounded moose. So that was what he
6 told me.

7
8 When these caribou herds are at this
9 low status, we need to have really good cow
10 conservation and I'm real happy that the Board saw the
11 light and started putting on some real conservation on
12 those cow caribou in the North Slope. You're not going
13 to get a herd to come back.

14
15 The perception is caribou run around in
16 these big herds. There must be like millions of them
17 and they must be highly productive. No, they're not
18 actually real productive. They have less than half of
19 the reproductive rate of a moose. If the moose
20 population fell by two-thirds, you wouldn't have any
21 cow moose harvest. But caribou are caribou, they're --
22 just shoot them. It's like no. Caribou have one calf
23 per year. They never have twins, ever. So they're
24 really a sensitive animal to harvest, so we need to
25 have caribou conservation.

26
27 The harvest was real high this year.
28 The enforcement was fairly lacking on the Dalton
29 Highway. We have a lot of draw permits on the Dalton
30 Highway. I saw a lot of hunters hunting. I'm not
31 enforcement, but I suspect that they were hunting --
32 either there was a road crew up there that just showed
33 up in the Upper Dietrich River. Those guys seemed to
34 think that there was wide-open hunting season there.

35
36 I've got trail cams on roads outside
37 the Dalton Highway Corridor. I've got pictures of
38 State vehicles that are supposed to be watching the
39 road. They're out driving all the roads. There was a
40 lot of hunting activity.

41
42 With the reduction in budget for the
43 State of Alaska, the Fish and Wildlife protection
44 officer that we have there he's overwhelmed and the BLM
45 officer, he's overwhelmed also. I can foresee that
46 this next year we're going to have enforcement problems
47 because there's the road crews. They show up in the
48 country. They pretty much think it's a free-for-all
49 system. They don't pay much attention to game
50

1 regulations unless somebody actually starts enforcing.

2

3 So our protection officer he's leaving,
4 so we'll have a new State enforcement officer/trooper.
5 So we're going to have some problems next year and
6 we're going to need to have additional Federal presence
7 on the Dalton Highway. So that's kind of heads up for
8 Brandon back there in the back of the room.

9

10 I did see a lot of gut piles. There
11 was quite a bit of harvest there. Moose were high.
12 Moose stayed low. They came down low in the upper
13 drainages through the end of the season. The oddity
14 was I saw large bulls eating food with cows and they're
15 still eating. They stayed real fat late into the
16 season. That was kind of unusual.

17

18 The hare population is really high
19 right now. The Brooks Range goes through an 18-year
20 modulation and our hare population is really high. The
21 wolves are basically ignoring large game animals and
22 eating rabbits. Practically all the droppings are just
23 full of rabbit bones and hair. But when the snow gets
24 over 15 inches, then the wolves switch to big game.
25 That's when it gets harder for them to catch those. So
26 with wolf populations increasing with this hare
27 population, that's going to eventually start to bite
28 into our local sheep and moose population.

29

30 The sheep population is really low, but
31 it's starting to turn around. We're starting to get
32 better lamb production. So there's conservation. The
33 main conservation was -- the Board of Game made it
34 illegal to spot sheep with an aircraft. During the
35 sheep season that highly affected the guide's ability
36 to harvest sheep. They were basically killing all
37 legal rams with the use of aircraft. Now they're
38 afraid to use aircraft because that's a misdemeanor.
39 So that was a very effective regulatory change that's
40 helped the sheep.

41

42 We had Gates of the Arctic Subsistence
43 Resource Commission met in Wiseman last April. That
44 commission makes regulatory recommendations. So we had
45 a conference call in August, so there will be comments
46 on these Federal proposals from that SRC.

47

48 I do want the Council to be aware that
49 Greg Roczicka died. He was on the Y-K Delta Council and

50

1 was very instrumental on conservation of salmon on the
2 Kuskokwim River and that was a real loss to the program
3 and to the people on the Kuskokwim River. I was
4 concerned. He was such a huge advocate for
5 conservation of chinook salmon and a conservation of
6 salmon in general.

7
8 I would like a letter written from this
9 Council of condolence to his family and to the Y-K
10 Delta Council. They lost a huge member of their
11 Council when they lost Greg. He was also on the Game
12 Board. That's where I first met him was in 2002. He
13 was on the Game Board at that time. He was a real
14 smart person.

15
16 Then Raymond Stoney, he was also on the
17 Western Interior Caribou Work Group, Northwest Arctic.
18 He died recently also. I would like a letter written
19 from this Council to his family and to that Regional
20 Council because those Councils lost two real important
21 members. I feel that in the Western Interior. I feel
22 that because we have a joint management with the
23 Kuskokwim and the Y-K Delta. I feel that on the
24 Western Interior side and I would like a letter of
25 condolence sent to those two Councils and their family
26 members.

27
28 That would be my report.

29
30 So it's 10:26.

31
32 We should go for a potty break here and
33 then we'll come back in 15 minutes.

34
35 (Off record)

36
37 (On record)

38
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're back on the
40 record.

41
42 Go ahead, Ray.

43
44 MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chair. I make a
45 motion that we authorize you to draft those letters of
46 condolence to the two individuals mentioned.

47
48 MR. HONEA: Second.

49
50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The discussion was
2 on Greg Roczicka and Raymond Stoney's Regional
3 Councils, Y-K Delta and Northwest Arctic, and their
4 family members.

5
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We have the motion
7 and second. Any further discussion on those letters.

8
9 (No comments)

10
11 MR. SIMON: Question.

12
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The question is
14 called. Those in favor of submitting those signify by
15 saying aye.

16
17 IN UNISON: Aye.

18
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed, same sign.

20
21 (No opposing votes)

22
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we're down on our
24 agenda items here. Service awards. Go ahead, Carl.

25
26 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
27 Members of Council. Good morning. MY name is Carl
28 Johnson. I'm the Council Coordination Division Chief
29 with the Office of Subsistence Management.

30
31 It's really quite an honor and a
32 privilege to be here at the table for this particular
33 reason and that is to recognize essentially a lifetime
34 of service to the Western Interior Region by one of
35 your members, Mr. Raymond Collins.

36
37 Ray Collins has been living off the
38 land in the Upper Kuskokwim River region since he moved
39 to Nikolai in 1963. He gained a deep understanding of
40 fish and wildlife resources from learning from the
41 elders in his area and spending season after season out
42 on the land.

43
44 He has shared his incredible knowledge
45 through a lifetime of service from serving over 40
46 years on the McGrath State Fish and Game Advisory
47 Committee, 24 years on this Council, and also serving
48 on the Denali National Park Subsistence Resource
49 Commission and the Kuskokwim River Salmon Working

50

1 Group.

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Through that service he has continued to gain a deeper knowledge of the resources in the Western Interior Region. He has shown to be a thoughtful, active and dedicated leader on fish and wildlife issues.

And these are just some of the reasons why the Federal Subsistence Board and the Office of Subsistence Management wanted to recognize and take a moment to offer this recognition to Raymond Collins for his many years of tremendous service to the people and to the resources of the Western Interior Region.

I would like to have the Council and everybody in this room join me in recognizing Raymond Collins.

(Applause)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Congratulations, Ray. You've got a couple words.

MR. COLLINS: I'm speechless.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, I've been with you on this Council since '93. Ray was our first Chair. Ray's done a lot of work on this Council. Pollock was there also. So really appreciate all your input and work for us, Ray.

MR. COLLINS: Well, thank you. I would like to mention that I really appreciate the elders that taught me the knowledge of the traditional ways and the language of the Upper Kuskokwim Athabaskans there in Nikolai. It was that that led me to get involved in these because of all they had invested in me and time as I was studying the language there. The payback has kind of been to be able to work on these groups and try to make the laws, both Federal and State, to work for the people up there.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you.

Pollock.

1 MR. SIMON: Yes, I'd like to
2 congratulate Ray for all his time on this board. Ray
3 lived around McGrath area all his life and he's been
4 active in fishing, wildlife and fish and game and also
5 this board for many years. I'd like to thank him for
6 his service. He has a good knowledge about the
7 subsistence way of life around that area and he's been
8 pretty active on this board and giving good advice to
9 us.

10
11 Thank you, Ray.

12
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Pollock.
14 So we're moving down on the agenda. We're on public
15 and tribal comments.

16
17 I have a guy named James Kowalsky who
18 would like to speak to us. Are you still here, James?

19
20 MR. KOWALSKY: I'm here.

21
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, come on up to
23 this mic here. Hit the little button there on that mic
24 so your little red light comes on and go ahead and tell
25 us what you need us to hear.

26
27 MR. KOWALSKY: I didn't expect to get
28 called so quickly, but thank you. Mr. Chairman and
29 Members of the RAC. My name is Jim Kowalsky. I'm a
30 retired guy with a sore leg. What I'm going to do is
31 just call your attention to a letter that we -- and
32 when I say we, I'm speaking of an organization which we
33 refer to as Alaskans For Wildlife. It's a wildlife
34 advocacy group in Alaska that I submitted earlier this
35 year.

36
37 This is in respect to WP18-51, which is
38 actually a proposal from the Eastern Council, but it's
39 a statewide proposal. I guess I don't need to re-read
40 the letter. I wanted to come just to reemphasize that
41 we are opposed to this proposal, particularly as it
42 regards public safety. This would be concerning using
43 human food for bear baiting. It's primarily a public
44 safety matter with us.

45
46 The comment that we submitted is on
47 Page 13 in this summary. There I state that it's a
48 statewide organization. We strongly oppose Proposal
49 18-51 which proposes to allow Federally qualified
50

1 subsistence hunters to add the use of human produced
2 foods and scent to presently permitted use of
3 biodegradable materials used to bait bears on all
4 public Federal lands.

5
6 So I guess I'm not going to take your
7 time to reread what we submitted then, but in general
8 we are opposed to this proposal particularly on the
9 basis of human safety. There have been recent
10 certainly good examples in late summer of human
11 fatalities caused by bears. So we see on one hand the
12 Department of Fish and Game urging people not to leave
13 garbage out and not to leave food around and on the
14 other hand the Board of Game makes bear baiting
15 possible, so it seems a conflict.

16
17 So, if you would, please maybe just
18 consider this point of view. You did ask for public
19 participation, which is why I'm here. I'd like to
20 point out that, if I may take a moment, quite some time
21 ago I was a subsistence director for Tanana Chiefs
22 Conference. I did it for seven years. Pollock Simon
23 will remember me, probably Ray Collins as well, so I am
24 familiar.

25
26 My input into this position that the
27 organization takes is substantial, but I want you to
28 know I'm surely not an expert, but I did have quite a
29 lot of experience in the 1980s with the TCC region and
30 probably six fish and game advisory councils to which I
31 gave technical assistance.

32
33 I'd also like to point out that the
34 reason you guys are here is because of Title VIII in
35 ANILCA and I was one of what I call ANILCA lawyers in
36 the 1970s. I was one of the Alaskans who helped put
37 together what was called the Alaska Coalition, which
38 became a huge nationwide effort to pass ANILCA. The
39 Title VIII, the subsistence title of ANILCA, may I say
40 was born in part in an Irish bar near the capital in
41 Washington, D.C. where I and a few others, including
42 Don Mitchell, the attorney for AFN at the time, cooked
43 up Title VIII.

44
45 Now I know also the public agencies
46 involved in ANILCA also had a great deal to do with
47 this, but this came from a grassroots effort. It's
48 interesting now, many years later, for me to look back
49 to those days when we thought Title VIII was a great
50

1 idea. So here you all are and I just want you to know
2 I'm not totally removed although I'm a suburban
3 Fairbanksan who doesn't actually hunt or fish, but I
4 did understand very close resource politics, which is
5 why I went to work for Tanana Chiefs Conference.
6

7 So I'm just saying this comes with a
8 background of close association with what you folks are
9 doing. In any case, please consider the fact that bear
10 baiting is not a great idea from a public safety point
11 of view.
12

13 And also if I may I'd like to point out
14 that these are Federal public lands and there's a broad
15 interest beyond subsistence for rural people, which of
16 course is important. That's what Title VIII is all
17 about and that's why it's there because we consider
18 that is really important to do.
19

20 But these are public lands and there is
21 a broad public interest that goes beyond the
22 discussions that I've seen in transcripts particularly
23 for the Southeast Alaska Regional Council. My God,
24 they went on for 125 pages and no one ever uttered a
25 word of recognition that -- in that case, they're
26 dealing with Tongass National Forest, public lands, a
27 broad public interest. So please don't lose track of
28 the fact that you can get a lot of good support from
29 the public if you don't do something, if I may say,
30 kind of crazy like baiting bears.
31

32 I know it's traditional and so I'm
33 sorry if I'm insulting people. I don't mean to do
34 that. There is a wide consideration of what you're
35 doing and I would like to think that if you act
36 responsibly in the public eye, you'll do okay, but
37 please avoid controversy if you can. We say that bear
38 baiting is very controversial.
39

40 I'm going to conclude with that.
41

42 I don't want to go on and on.
43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thank you.
45 Does any Council Members have questions of Jim.
46

47 Pollock.
48

49 MR. SIMON: I want to mention also I
50

1 sit on the Koyukuk River Advisory Committee and the
2 villages in that area have been always opposed to bear
3 baiting because afraid that animals would come to the
4 town looking into trash barrels and looking for food.
5 So we have been opposed to bear baiting most of the
6 time.

7

8 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

9

10 MR. KOWALSKY: So you're saying
11 habituating bears to human food is a concern for
12 Allakaket and Alatna, right? It is an issue.

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So Darrel.

15

16 MR. VENT: Yeah, I'd like to thank you
17 for mentioning that. That brings a problem back in the
18 village that we're having right now where the bears are
19 starting to come into the village. So it's probably
20 one of the reasons why they're starting to move toward
21 our village. I guess they must have been baiting them
22 somewhere and they moved into our area and they just go
23 right for the village.

24

25 MR. KOWALSKY: That's interesting to
26 hear that.

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I thank you
29 for your comments.

30

31 MR. KOWALSKY: You're welcome. Thanks
32 for letting me speak.

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You're quite
35 welcome. Do we have any tribal comments or any other
36 public comments at this time? I always have the floor
37 open and available each morning.

38

39 (No comments)

40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I don't see anybody
42 jumping up and down.

43

44 So old business.

45

46 The Caribou Work Group.

47

48 Zach.

49

50

1 MR. STEVENSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
2 Through the Chair. This subject came up as a result of
3 a request that dates back to December of 2016. At that
4 time there was concern by not only this Council but
5 several other Councils who collectively in one form or
6 another utilize caribou resources for -- I should say
7 by Federally qualified subsistence users. The region
8 that I'm discussing in particular includes not only the
9 Western Interior Region, but also the Seward Peninsula,
10 Northwest Arctic and North Slope Regions.

11
12 At that time in December 2016, there
13 was concern about the decline in the Unit 23 caribou
14 herd, which includes portions of not only the Teshekpuk
15 Herd, but also the North Slope and also portions of the
16 Mulchatna Herds. At that time there was an interest in
17 providing a means for those associated Regional
18 Advisory Councils to share information and through the
19 sharing of that information help to provide for
20 hopefully a more coordinated management across Federal
21 public lands of that resources.

22
23 In order to share information and do so
24 in a manner that is in accordance and compliance with
25 Federal law, particularly ensuring that information
26 shared is done in a public fashion, it was recognized
27 that the formation of such a group had to be done on
28 the record. So at that time in the winter of 2016, a
29 teleconference was held with the various Chairs of
30 those four associated regions. Again those being the
31 Western Interior, North Slope, Northwest Arctic and
32 Seward Peninsula herds. This Council was at that time
33 represented by the Vice Chair, then Ray Collins, who
34 discussed the formation of that group, and all groups
35 expressed interest in forming that body.

36
37 Now it is at the discretion of this
38 Council to decide whether or not on the record it
39 chooses to formulate that group. Again the purpose of
40 this, in this case so-called Caribou Working Group, but
41 again would be to provide for the sharing of
42 information that affects caribou on Federal public
43 lands. This would not be a decision-making body.

44
45 Any information shared by this group
46 would be brought back to the attention of the Council
47 for its purposes, whatever those might be, and the
48 sharing of that information would need to be done
49 telephonically, specifically there are not monies or
50

1 funds available to meet in person, but that would need
2 to be done telephonically.

3
4 This Council, should it choose to
5 formulate that group, would need to appoint members to
6 serve on that body and they could meet telephonically
7 with other Councils as it saw fit, when it saw fit.

8
9 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

10
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Zach. I
12 think it would behoove this Council, it would be
13 beneficial to this Council to work with the other
14 Regional Councils that we overlap in jurisdiction on
15 those Western Arctic, Teshekpuk, Central Arctic Caribou
16 Herds. Mulchatna also. We overlap with them with the
17 Bristol Bay Regional Advisory Council.

18
19 I would like to meet telephonically
20 with those Councils to get on the same sheet of music
21 and start talking about real management of caribou.
22 There's a lot of misinformation that floats around in
23 these Councils. When we had that big joint meeting
24 down there in Anchorage, I was talking to Bristol Bay
25 and they had some misperceptions about Mulchatna and
26 what some of the biological parameters were of
27 Mulchatna.

28
29 So I would like to have our biological
30 staff on the conference call with current data and I
31 would like those -- if we're going to talk about the
32 northern populations of caribou, we should have Council
33 members from our Council and the other Regional
34 Councils telephonically to discuss these caribou issues
35 so that we can start working in a more concise
36 direction towards managing caribou.

37
38 So I would entertain a motion to join a
39 Caribou Working Group for the northwestern portion that
40 would be Seward Pen, Northwest Arctic RAC, North Slope
41 and WIRAC. For the southern portion of our region,
42 WIRAC, YK-Delta and Bristol Bay Regional Advisory
43 Councils for Mulchatna.

44
45 MR. THOMAS: How many different herds
46 does this involve?

47
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: There would be four
49 main herds that would be involved in the discussion.

50

1 The Northwest Arctic Herd, Teshekpuk, Central Arctic
2 are the herds of concern because those have declined
3 and Mulchatna is the other overlap. That's in your
4 area down there.

5
6 MR. THOMAS: We haven't seen any
7 caribou in our area in quite a few years now, so
8 whatever we could do to get them to come back, if
9 anything. Or it's just a natural occurring thing that
10 they keep changing their migration, whether they work
11 north or they work south or whatever, you know. It's
12 just going to take a little time. Yeah, I think it
13 would be a good idea.

14
15 I will move that we set up a relation
16 with these people, whatever we have to do so we get
17 some feed into it, you know. It's just as much our
18 concern as theirs.

19
20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Council members that
21 would be involved with the Mulchatna Herd, you, Ray,
22 probably myself. Northwest populations, Western
23 Arctic, Teshekpuk, Central Arctic, I would like to be
24 on that work group also.

25
26 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair, I second that
27 since he made the motion.

28
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. We have a
30 motion. The discussion is the layout. Who is going to
31 be -- we should have at least three members from each
32 Council on the call and then the Council would appoint
33 membership to each one of those. There's going to be
34 two different work groups because it's two different --
35 people in the southern portion of our region are not
36 going to be real interested in the northern caribou,
37 vice versa.

38
39 Darrel. Discussion.

40
41 MR. VENT: I just wanted to add on
42 that. We used to have caribou come right into our
43 yard, running into our clothes line, get caught on our
44 clothes lines. Then we came into ANILCA and they said,
45 oh, we're going to put the pipeline here and it's not
46 going to affect your herd, there's not going to be no
47 difference. There's going to be caribou all over the
48 place. Once they put the pipeline in we noticed a
49 dramatic decrease in caribou.

50

1 They weren't coming into our area any
2 more. The only ones that were coming in was from the
3 Northwest Arctic Herd or the Teshekpuk Herd. We lost
4 that migration pattern and they said that wasn't going
5 to affect us, but we knew that wasn't right.

6
7 One of my grandfathers, Edwin Simon, he
8 argued quite a bit about that before he passed on. He
9 encouraged me, you guys got to get an education. Go
10 out there and start speaking for our people. That's
11 just some of the concerns that I see. How are we going
12 to make them come back from something when they said
13 that -- you know, they made a promise saying, oh, no,
14 it's not going to affect the herds, but it did. That
15 was on record.

16
17 Now we're dealing with caribou where we
18 have to go all the way over to Selawik to catch a
19 caribou. It's time consuming, costs a lot of money for
20 the parts that you have to pay for your snowmachine to
21 get over there, the amount of gas. Fuel prices over
22 there is 11, 12 dollars a gallon, so it's not cheap.
23 You know, we love all that caribou meat. That's some
24 of the subsistence that we use. Moose, caribou and
25 some of the fish. Now we're basically depending mainly
26 on moose now.

27
28 Those are some of the things that I
29 think are concerning to our area and that's one of the
30 things that I'm willing to address if need be.

31
32 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

33
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Darrel.
35 Well, conservation of caribou, the larger the herd, the
36 more distance the herd has to cover. The bigger the
37 herd, the more distance they cover, they feed more
38 people. I'm an advocate for maintaining large herds.

39
40 Caribou eat cotton grass, flowers,
41 flowering forbs and willow leaves in the summertime.
42 These managers get way over-fixated on the summer
43 range. They're going to eat themselves out of house
44 and home. No, those are very productive plants. The
45 winter range is lichen. The bigger the herd, the more
46 lichen they have to have, so they cover more distance.
47 There's an untapped amount of lichen in the Interior of
48 Alaska. Caribou used to use and apparently there used
49 to be phenomenally huge caribou herds in the Interior
50

1 of Alaska before the Gold Rush when they had market
2 hunting that shot them out and various other problems.

3
4 Caribou, the bigger the herd, the more
5 distance they'll cover. Forty-Mile used to cover lots
6 of country. Western Arctic and the Arctic Herds used
7 to cover a lot of country. Mulchatna and that
8 Southwest population used to go all the way to the
9 Yukon River. You can see the trail etched on the tops
10 of the ground all the way through the Kuskokwim
11 Mountains. There used to be phenomenally huge herds.
12 Those are documented where they had to tie steamboats
13 up at Ruby because there was too many caribou swimming
14 across the river coming out of the south.

15
16 We need to have large herds because
17 they feed more people. That's the kind of discussion I
18 want to talk about with these other Councils is let's
19 rebuild these herds to these larger populations and
20 let's maintain them. No, shoot them all out and wipe
21 them down to low numbers where they get below their
22 predator thresholds.

23
24 We want to recover these herds and
25 maintain them at large population, then they feed a lot
26 of people. That's the kind of discussion we need to
27 have. People have to understand the biology of these
28 caribou.

29
30 So we have a motion and a second on the
31 floor.

32
33 We have a couple more comments.

34
35 Pollock.

36
37 MR. SIMON: Yeah, I sit on a Caribou
38 Working Group. We have an annual meeting in December.
39 It's a large group of people all along the coast. Me
40 and Benedict Jones represent Koyukuk River. Folks
41 always comment a lot of wolves and grizzly bears in the
42 area that's eating a lot of caribous and that's part of
43 the reason the caribou decline. The populations kind
44 of fluctuate quite a bit. It's low sometimes and they
45 come back up sometimes.

46
47 But I mentioned that to increase
48 population you could do well by dispatching some wolves
49 and grizzly bears, but the State and Federal agencies
50

1 are opposed to doing wolf control and bear control to
2 increase the caribou population.

3
4 Well, the people in the area depend on
5 meat and caribou meat is their main diet on the coast.
6 It seems like if there's a decline in some kind of
7 animal population, the subsistence users are always cut
8 back first. We don't always use a lot of caribou.
9 Wolves and bears kill lots of it too. That's why I
10 said to do well by dispatching some wolves and
11 grizzlies.

12
13 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

14
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Pollock.

16
17 Don.

18
19 MR. HONEA: Yeah, just real quick. My
20 recommendation, if we're looking for members to sit on
21 this working group, is to get any members off of here
22 that has direct capacity, like Pollock and like here
23 for the Mulchatna Herd, and to use them if they so
24 wish.

25
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's my
27 understanding. We're just passing a motion to form the
28 working group and at a future time we'll set the
29 membership. Correct?

30
31 MR. STEVENSON: Pardon me, Mr. Chair.
32 Close. My understanding is that there's two issues
33 that need to be addressed now. One is who would serve
34 on this body from this Council and secondarily does
35 this Council move to adopt that body, this working
36 group.

37
38 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

39
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We have a motion to
41 adopt the bodies and then after that motion I'll take
42 another motion to appoint the membership to those
43 bodies. There will be two different bodies.

44
45 Dennis.

46
47 MR. THOMAS: Now 15, 20 years ago when
48 that herd was really large and was moving through our
49 area back there, there were people bringing plane loads
50

1 of hunters out from town. One time I was coming off
2 from Anchorage and they landed at Osprey Lodge up there
3 somewhere on the Holitna and they must have dropped off
4 10 or 15 people there to go hunting and they had a
5 whole bunch of people at camp already. Now this puts a
6 lot of pressure on that kind of a herd.

7
8 So if this starts building up again,
9 somehow or another we could try and work with the State
10 to keep those numbers down. Now I don't know how many
11 you could take from the herd. There might be some way
12 to do it. But I remember there was an awful, awful lot
13 of out of state, non-Native, whatever you want to call
14 it, alien-type hunters that were coming in. I mean a
15 whole plane full of them. I would rather not see that
16 kind of a pressure on that herd again.

17
18 For years they came right through the
19 village like we talked about and now I haven't seen one
20 in years. And these numbers, okay, the bigger they
21 spread out, they get smaller and then they shrink up.

22
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Mulchatna was
24 200,000 caribou and it was dropped to 28,000. So of
25 course they don't go nearly as far. They don't go to
26 your country anymore because there's not that many
27 caribou anymore.

28
29 MR. THOMAS: Right. Well, somebody
30 made a rumor one time there were 400-some-thousand
31 caribou in that herd.

32
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's
34 misinformation.

35
36 MR. THOMAS: I don't know whether it
37 was.

38
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That was
40 misinformation.

41
42 MR. THOMAS: I mean this is just what
43 came to us.

44
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's why we have
46 to have these work groups because we get current
47 information, everybody gets on the same sheet of music
48 with facts.

49
50

1 So we have a motion on the floor to --
2 real quick.

3
4 MR. ALEXIE: Mr. Chair. I'd like to
5 make a motion to.....

6
7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We have a motion on
8 the floor. We have a motion that we have to address
9 right now. The motion on the floor right now is
10 to.....

11
12 MR. ALEXIE: To accept the group?

13
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:formulate two
15 different work groups for Mulchatna and the Northwest
16 Arctic and including various Regional Councils that
17 would be affected. That's the first motion.

18
19 MR. ALEXIE: Okay.

20
21 MR. HONEA: Question.

22
23 MR. ALEXIE: Okay, I'll make that
24 motion then.

25
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No, it's already on
27 the floor. That's already been.....

28
29 MR. VENT: Call for question.

30
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We need a question
32 on that. Darrel calls the question on that main
33 motion. Those in favor of the main motion signify by
34 saying aye.

35
36 IN UNISON: Aye.

37
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed, same sign.

39
40 (No opposing votes)

41
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Now to appoint to
43 the Northwest Work Group, which would be for Northwest
44 Arctic Caribou, Teshekpuk, Central Arctic, we should
45 have at least three members from this Council. I would
46 like to be on the Northwest Council for sure.

47
48 MR. VENT: If it's available, I would
49 like to be on there too.

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Darrel, myself,
2 Northwest. Pollock, you're on the Northwest Arctic
3 Caribou Work Group. Do you want to be on the Council's
4 -- work with these other Advisory Councils on the
5 caribou?

6
7 MR. SIMON: I would be interested to
8 listen.

9
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It's a conference
11 call, so you'd just be on the phone.

12
13 MR. SIMON: Okay.

14
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:when we meet.

16
17 MR. SIMON: But I'm already on the
18 Caribou Working Group. Would it be better if you choose
19 somebody else to give somebody else an opportunity to
20 be on the board. But if nobody else, I'm interested.
21 Thank you.

22
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, you live in
24 the northern part. It's us guys in the northern part
25 of the region that would be on that work group. You
26 know about those caribou.

27
28 MR. STEVENSON: Mr. Chair. Through the
29 Chair. To clarify for Member Simon. The intent behind
30 this Caribou Working Group is different from what
31 currently exists at the -- in this multi-agency caribou
32 working group which you're involved in, Mr. Simon, in
33 that this body would focus exclusively on involving the
34 Regional Advisory Councils. That's it. It's to
35 facilitate or provide for information sharing amongst
36 the Councils. It's a bit of a narrower scope just to
37 make that distinction clear.

38
39 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

40
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks for that
42 clarification, Zach.

43
44 So those in favor of the main motion
45 signify by saying aye.

46
47 IN UNISON: Aye.

48
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed, same sign.

50

1 (No opposing votes)

2

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CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Appointment to the Northwest Regional Council conference call. I would like to be on that, Darrel stated that he would like to and Pollock. You hunt caribou, don't you, Fred?

MR. ALEXIE: No.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So is that agreeable to the Council? We need a motion to appoint those members to the Northwest.....

MR. THOMAS: Can you say those names again.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It would be myself, Darrel and Pollock.

MR. THOMAS: Okay.

MR. HONEA: I make a motion to it.

MS. PELKOLA: Second.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Motion and seconded. Those in favor of that signify by saying aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed, same sign.

(No opposing votes)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And then the Southwest Work Group that would include Yukon Delta, Bristol Bay and Western Interior.

For Mulchatna Herd would be Dennis.

MR. THOMAS: Yeah, Crooked Creek.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And Ray.

MR. THOMAS: Ray, yeah.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do you want to be on there, Ray?

1 MR. COLLINS: If it's just audio
2 conference, I could. Yes.

3
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah. Okay. And I
5 would join that group.

6
7 MR. THOMAS: Well, you know, this kind
8 of stuff really interests me to do something, but all
9 these facts and numbers and stuff I don't have at my
10 fingertips.

11
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's going to be
13 provided by our staff.

14
15 MR. THOMAS: Okay.

16
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don't worry about
18 that part.

19
20 MR. THOMAS: I'd be more than happy to
21 do it. I'd like to do it.

22
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Do we have a
24 motion to appoint those members.

25
26 MS. PELKOLA: Make a motion to appoint
27 them.

28
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Motion by Jenny.

30
31 MR. VENT: Second.

32
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seconded by Darrel.
34 The membership would be Dennis, Ray and myself.

35
36 Those in favor of that motion signify
37 by saying aye.

38
39 IN UNISON: Aye.

40
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed, same sign.

42
43 (No opposing votes)

44
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So that covers that
46 Caribou Work Group. Kuskokwim Partnership Project.
47 Stewart is going to be on the phone. Are you on the
48 phone, Stewart? Do we have staff for this one?

49
50

1 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair.
2 Jack, I believe we either had Stewart Cogswell or Carol
3 Damberg available telephonically to address the
4 Kuskokwim status update.

5
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Come up to the mic.
7

8 MS. DAMBERG: Hi. My name is Carol
9 Damberg. I'm the Regional Subsistence Coordinator.
10 Formerly it was Trevor Fox in this position. So I'll
11 speak on behalf of the Kuskokwim Partnership unless
12 Stewart Cogswell or Karen Clark -- was somebody trying
13 to come in?

14
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Anybody on the phone
16 to speak about the Kuskokwim Partnership Project?

17
18 (No comments)
19

20 MS. DAMBERG: Okay. I'll go ahead.
21 There's not a lot to report. We are in progress
22 working on the charter as well as trying to develop
23 what they call a terms of reference document for an
24 agreement with the State. The goal of the project is
25 to try to bring together the Intertribal Fish
26 Commission and the Kuskokwim Working Group as one
27 entity to try to help inform the management of the
28 salmon on the Kuskokwim and working with the in-season
29 manager, Ken Stahlnecker of Yukon Delta National
30 Wildlife Refuge.

31
32 So it's in progress. We had hoped to
33 have something for the RACs to look at this go-round,
34 but we're now hopeful that it will be in the winter
35 instead. So we don't have anything to present in
36 writing at this point.

37
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. That would be
39 more appropriate at our winter meeting, which moves
40 more towards the fishery.

41
42 MS. DAMBERG: So that's what I've got.
43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. That was
45 beneficial. Thank you.

46
47 Carl.

48
49 MR. JOHNSON: Mr. Chair and for
50

1 everybody on the phone, Carl Johnson with OSM. I just
2 wanted to say why I was here sitting next to Carol.
3 That is I've just been recently brought in to the team
4 that's working on this because we're kind of moving in
5 closer to the implementation stage. I'm going to be
6 working on this moving forward. So I will likely be a
7 point of contact on this for the Councils affected in
8 the future.

9

10 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah. We'll call
13 you too. Thank you. So we're on new business, which
14 is Wildlife Proposals. So Lisa. Is she.....

15

16 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: I'll go get her.

17

18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah. She's on.

19

20 MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman. Do we have
21 a page on that?

22

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: She's going to lay
24 it out for us. She has a plan, a road map of how to
25 deal with all these.

26

27 Go ahead, Lisa.

28

29 MS. MAAS: Thank you. For the record,
30 my name is Lisa Maas. I'm a wildlife biologist with
31 Office of Subsistence Management. I know WP18-32 is
32 listed first on the agenda, but that's related to a
33 bunch of other proposals, so the recommendation is to
34 start off with 33/36 and then move WP18-32 to the end
35 of the Western Interior Region proposals and cluster
36 those with the other caribou proposals. That includes
37 48, 49, 57, 46, 47 and then 45. So all those proposals
38 kind of have a lot of overlapping information. So it
39 probably makes the most sense to consider all those
40 proposals together and then start off with 33, 36.

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I like that plan.
43 So we're going to start off with WP18-33 and 36. What
44 page is that in our book here?

45

46 MS. MAAS: It's in your supplemental
47 materials packet in your binders. I don't know if
48 there's page numbers.

49

50

1 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair.
2 There were a significant number of wildlife proposals
3 and related analyses that we're reviewing. As you came
4 in the front door there, they're arranged sequentially
5 in numeric order. That's when you come in the
6 right-hand side of the room. So for those that are
7 looking for proposals, a printed copy, they are
8 available as well at the front door for members of the
9 public.

10
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: In our book it's
12 hard to find the proposals. The pages aren't numbered
13 here, so we can't like leaf right to it. That would be
14 about a quarter of an inch into your packet you'll find
15 WP18-33/36 combination. Unit 21E moose.

16
17 (Pause)

18
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Go ahead,
20 Lisa.

21
22 MS. MAAS: All right. Thank you, Mr.
23 Chair. Members of the Council. Again for the record
24 my name is Lisa Maas and I'll be presenting a summary
25 of the analysis for WP18-33/36. Proposal WP18-33 was
26 submitted by the Western Interior Council and requests
27 that the Unit 21E moose season be shortened 12 days
28 from August 25th to September 30th to September 1st to
29 September 25th.

30
31 Wildlife Proposal WP18-36 was submitted
32 by the Grayling, Anvik, Shageluk, Holy Cross Fish and
33 Game Advisory Committee, or GASH AC, and requests the
34 same season changes as Proposal 33 and also that a
35 State registration permit be required.

36
37 The Western Interior Council states
38 that the proposed season change would reduce regulatory
39 complexity and user confusion by aligning State and
40 Federal moose seasons in Unit 21E. The GASH AC states
41 that the different State and Federal moose seasons and
42 permit requirements leads to user confusion and that
43 the proposed changes should not affect subsistence use
44 or the moose population. The proponent also notes that
45 a registration permit hunt will provide more accurate
46 harvest information and that few Federally qualified
47 subsistence users hunt during the August season.

48
49 In 2014, the Board of Game adopted
50

1 Proposal 60 to require a registration permit for moose
2 in Unit 21E. A harvest ticket is currently required
3 under Federal regulations.

4
5 In 2017, the Board of Game adopted
6 Proposal 76 to change the State moose season in Unit
7 21E to September 1st to September 25th. Proposal 76
8 was submitted by the GASH AC with the intent of
9 aligning State and Federal moose seasons. The Unit 21E
10 moose population increased in 2016 meeting management
11 objectives. The bull/cow ratio is high and well above
12 management objectives. The calf/cow ratio has been
13 above or within management objectives.
14 Browse surveys and twinning rates indicate that habitat
15 is not limiting this moose population.

16
17 Moose are an important subsistence
18 resource for local communities evidenced by the vast
19 majority of local households using moose in a given
20 year. Over the last 25 years reported moose harvest
21 has averaged 147 moose per year. However, many
22 harvested moose are not reported.

23
24 The Yukon Innoko Moose Management Plan
25 estimated the total Unit 21E moose harvest as 340
26 moose, which is still within management objectives.
27 Reporting rates improved dramatically in 2014 when the
28 State required registration permits. 72 percent of
29 reported moose harvest has occurred in mid September or
30 only 10 percent has occurred in late September.

31
32 Adoption of this proposal would reduce
33 opportunity for Federally qualified subsistence users
34 by shortening the moose season in Unit 21E. While
35 there is no biological reason for this, a shorter
36 season would reduce user confusion and regulatory
37 complexity by aligning State and Federal seasons and
38 reduce law enforcement concerns due to the checkerboard
39 pattern of land ownership in Unit 21E.

40
41 Additionally, this request came from
42 the Western Interior Council and GASH AC, which
43 represent local subsistence users. Requiring a
44 registration permit would also reduce user confusion by
45 aligning State and Federal reporting requirements and
46 could result in more accurate harvest data. However,
47 concurrence would be needed from the State to allow
48 Federally qualified subsistence users to use a State
49 registration permit.

50

1 The OSM preliminary conclusion is to
2 support WP18-36 with modification to clarify the
3 regulatory language for permit requirements during the
4 fall season and to remove the regulatory language
5 referring to permit conditions and season closures for
6 the winter season and delegate authority to set permit
7 conditions and announce season closures for the winter
8 season via a delegation of authority letter only and to
9 take no action on WP18-33.

10
11 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

12
13 I would be happy to field any
14 questions.

15
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: How much harvest was
17 occurring in the August portion of that hunt?

18
19 MS. MAAS: Very little. Let's see.
20 Yeah, I think it was hardly any in August.

21
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So trimming those
23 days would have little effect.

24
25 MS. MAAS: Yeah, that is correct. I
26 don't have the specific percentages for August, but 72
27 percent of reported harvest has occurred between
28 September 9th and September 22nd while only 10 percent
29 has occurred after September 22nd.

30
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The question future
32 for the Board would be what that harvest would be
33 previous in the August portion, you know. That's what
34 the Board is going to want to know. If we trim those
35 August days off, what have we lost. We've lost a
36 couple of moose or five, but I don't think it's
37 significant because we just had a lot of discussion on
38 this Council about it's so hot it's hard to keep meat
39 as it is let alone in August. Our Federal season opens
40 on August 25. I don't even think about shooting a
41 moose. It's really hot and really buggy.

42
43 Any questions for Lisa on the
44 proposals. OSM's preliminary conclusion is to support
45 Proposal 33, our proposal, and then they have this
46 modified language, which I support.

47
48 Darrel.

49
50

1 MR. VENT: These dealings with areas
2 that I'm not familiar with, so if there was anybody
3 that had anymore information on this proposal that was
4 put in by GASH, maybe that would explain more of what's
5 going on here, but I don't see anyone here besides
6 Lisa's information. So I can't speak on anything on
7 behalf of that, but wish they had more involvement in
8 this.

9
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, Fred lives
11 down in that country. We're going to look at Fred.

12
13 MR. ALEXIE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
14 kind of like that idea of changing it and I think it
15 was brought up by our tribe at one time and I think
16 Nulato Tribe introduced a proposal similar to that
17 also. Because it's wanton waste for us with an earlier
18 season, the August season. In September, if it was any
19 normal year, it would have been ideal.

20
21 Like I say, we're all going through
22 major climate change, so we've got to learn to adapt,
23 write our proposals accordingly to whatever. Otherwise
24 we're going to have too much wanton waste and I can't
25 see wasting any kind of game, which is so valuable to
26 all of us subsistence users or anybody really.

27
28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Dennis.

29
30 MR. THOMAS: When I moved back to the
31 Kuskokwim in 1973, the moose season opened the 20th
32 through the 25th of August and then they found that
33 some guides down there were piling the meat up and
34 piling the meat up, then they were selling the meat
35 out. Well, not really selling it. They chartered from
36 where to where and then it was caught and brought to
37 the attention of the State. So that's when they
38 changed it to September 1st in our area. I don't know
39 why it wouldn't be fairly easy to do in an area up
40 where you're at right now. Because the State did that
41 arbitrarily.

42
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're in the
44 introduction of the proposal and the analysis. My
45 question is do you have any questions for Lisa on the
46 proposal. Is the proposal clear in your mind?

47
48 (No comments)

49
50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Now we're going to
2 go for what does the tribes say. There was a
3 conference call with the tribes and hopefully there's
4 some input from the tribes. Do we have any comments
5 from the tribes or do we have any tribal members in the
6 room or on the phone that would like to speak to these
7 proposals.

8
9 Darrel.

10
11 MR. VENT: The one thing on there is
12 the clarity on the permit situation. I didn't have any
13 information on because -- see they want to introduce a
14 permit situation for the winter season hunt, is that
15 what it's stating on there?

16
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The Board of Game
18 implemented a State registration permit as required for
19 that unit, so that's -- people are getting that to hunt
20 the river corridor already and this would make the same
21 permit apply to the Federal lands, correct?

22
23 MS. MAAS: Yes, that is correct. This
24 is a State registration permit for the fall season.

25
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Pollock.

27
28 MR. SIMON: I would support this
29 proposal, the GASH AC proposal. We don't have members
30 from that area now. Robert Walker retired last year,
31 so he can't speak to this proposal, but I support the
32 people that proposed it.

33
34 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

35
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Zach.

37
38 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair. One
39 minor correction. This Council currently does have one
40 member from the affected area and that would be Shirley
41 Clark from Grayling. Unfortunately she's not here in
42 person, but is participating telephonically.

43
44 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

45
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Have you gotten word
47 from her or why she's not on the phone?

48
49 MR. STEVENSON: I believe she's on the
50

1 phone now.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are you on the
4 phone, Shirley?

5

6 (No response)

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: She wasn't on the
9 phone earlier.

10

11 MS. PELKOLA: Mr. Chair.

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Jenny.

14

15 MS. PELKOLA: I would also support this
16 proposal.

17

18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're not in
19 deliberation yet. I'm trying to get down the list
20 here. I'm trying to get the tribal comments. I guess
21 there were none. So now I'll go to the Alaska
22 Department of Fish and Game agency comments.

23

24 Go ahead.

25

26 MR. BUTLER: Mr. Chair. This is Lem
27 Butler. Can you hear me? I'm on the phone.

28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, I hear you,
30 Lem.

31

32 MR. BUTLER: How are you doing? Again,
33 I'm Lem Butler with the Alaska Department of Fish and
34 Game. I'm the Assistant Director for the Division of
35 Wildlife Conservation. I believe we have Josh Peirce,
36 who is our local area biologist on the phone as well to
37 speak to the proposal. Just as a way of introducing
38 the comments that you're going to hear from the State,
39 we really appreciate the opportunity to participate in
40 this process and to offer our comments on these
41 upcoming proposals.

42

43 All of our recommendations that you're
44 going to hear at this point are still preliminary.
45 We're trying to gather information. We're interested in
46 hearing what this Council has to share in terms of
47 local information, but we're here to share experience
48 and expertise and give you an idea of where we think a
49 good direction to go on some of these proposals might

50

1 be. So we'll be happy to help you as you go through
2 the deliberation.

3
4 If Josh is on the phone, maybe he can
5 address the proposals specifically.

6
7 Otherwise I'm happy to offer the
8 State's comments.

9
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: State your name for
11 the record.

12
13 MS. PARKER MCNEILL: My name is Doreen
14 Parker McNeill, Management Coordinator for the Alaska
15 Department of Fish and Game. I just did want to say
16 that Josh is on the phone.

17
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are you there, Josh?

19
20 MR. PIERCE: Good afternoon, Jack.
21 This is Josh on the phone here, yeah.

22
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Josh.
24 Go ahead.

25
26 MR. PIERCE: Yeah, so I can speak to
27 the proposal briefly. I've been listening to a few of
28 the questions. I don't have the exact numbers for
29 August. I can certainly get those. But to answer that
30 question it's very small. In the last five years I'd
31 be surprised if there were more than five moose shot
32 during that August season. Like you guys talked about,
33 people really don't hunt that early. It's warm still.

34
35 As the latter part of the season goes
36 after the State season closes on the 25th, there is a
37 short little window there and there is a little bit of
38 harvest that takes place during that timeframe as well.
39 As you guys know though, that's not the most popular
40 time to hunt for folks out there. Those large bulls
41 start to really get rutty, meat quality starts to go
42 downhill again. It's also a very small percentage of
43 people that hunt during that time as well.

44
45 So the bulk of the hunting takes place
46 during what is the State season right now and as was
47 pointed out by OSM we've had a registration permit now
48 for the last several years that began in 2014. Harvest
49 reporting really increased dramatically when that

50

1 system was implemented. Then we also added and quite
2 happily to have the Federal harvest take place on that
3 registration permit as it again improved harvest
4 reporting significantly.

5
6 A lot of confusion before that. People
7 were always calling up and wondering when they could
8 hunt, where, what piece of land they could hunt on,
9 where the Federal lands were, which are not that easily
10 accessible via boat during the fall. In addition to
11 that they needed to know if they had to have the green
12 harvest ticket or registration permit. So it was lots
13 of confusion. It's been a big improvement since
14 we.....

15
16 (Teleconference interruption -
17 participant phones not muted)

18
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Whoever is talking
20 on the phone.....

21
22 MR. COLLINS: Shirley.

23
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Shirley, don't talk
25 over Josh Peirce is speaking right now. If you have to
26 control kids or something, you can push *6. We want to
27 know what you have to say on this proposal also. I was
28 just breaking in there.

29
30 Go ahead, Josh.

31
32 MR. PEIRCE: Okay. Thank you, Mr.
33 Chair.

34
35 So basically what we've got right now
36 is these two seasons like I said and the last couple
37 years we've had a lot of improvement. However kind of
38 the final step that the folks out in that area talked
39 about making was trying to get the seasons in the fall
40 aligned in their entirety.

41
42 So the GASH submitted a proposal to the
43 Board of Game, which they adopted as you just heard, so
44 the State season, which was the 5th to the 25th is now
45 the 1st to the 25th. Part of the idea with that was to
46 start to align the State and Federal seasons. That was
47 kind of the first step and then the next step is
48 obviously the WIRAC's proposal as well as the GASH's
49 proposal to shorten the Federal season now so that they

50

1 would coincide exactly and it would be from September
2 1st to the 25th.

3
4 And then of course separate from all of
5 this there still is winter Federal season only, which
6 allows the Federally qualified subsistence users of the
7 21E moose resource to hunt in the wintertime if they
8 were not able to catch their moose during the fall
9 season. So there's still that opportunity as well.

10
11 That's just a real brief overview, but
12 I'd be happy to answer other specific questions if I
13 can.

14
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks for that
16 information, Josh. Anybody have questions for Josh,
17 area biologist from McGrath.

18
19 (No comments)

20
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seeing none here in
22 the room. Any other State comments? I think that
23 covered it.

24
25 MR. COLLINS: What about Shirley?

26
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And Shirley? Yeah,
28 well, she's not State. We'll get to Shirley in
29 deliberation. Any other Federal comments.

30
31 (No comments)

32
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Innoko Refuge
34 comments.

35
36 Jeremy.

37
38 MR. HAVENER: Thank you, Mr. Chair and
39 Council Members. For the record, my name is Jeremy
40 Havener. I'm the Refuge Subsistence Coordinator for
41 Koyukuk/Nowitna/Innoko. I just wanted to get on record
42 saying that we do support this proposal. We understand
43 the challenges that go along with the Federal hunt and
44 trying to understand the land status and all the
45 confusion that goes along with that.

46
47 That was all I had.

48
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thank you.

50

1 Again, any tribal comments.

2
3 (No comments)

4
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So advisory
6 committees.

7
8 (No comments)

9
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: This is a GASH
11 proposal WP18-36, so that is the advisory committee's
12 own comment is their own proposal. OSM is supporting
13 WP18-36 because of its aspect of the State registration
14 permit. So we took their comment as the proposal.

15
16 Any written comments on this, Zach?

17
18 MR. STEVENSON: No, Mr. Chair.

19
20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any public
21 testimony. Anybody on the phone, other than Shirley,
22 have public comments.

23
24 (No comments)

25
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Are you still
27 there, Shirley? Press star 6 again, Shirley, if you're
28 still on there and you've muted out. We can't hear
29 you.

30
31 (No response)

32
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No, she's dropped
34 off again. So Regional Council's recommendation. A
35 motion to adopt. The Chair will entertain a motion to
36 adopt the OSM preliminary conclusion to support
37 Proposal WP18-36 with modification.

38
39 MR. PEIRCE: Mr. Chair. This is Josh
40 from McGrath again.

41
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Josh. Go
43 ahead, Josh.

44
45 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: He's doing a roll
46 call.

47
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hearing lots of
49 background noise there. We're wanting a motion to adopt

50

1 Proposal WP18-36 with modification as in our book on
2 Page 2, OSM's regulatory language as stated, September
3 1 through the 25th, eliminating the August 25 and the
4 last portion September 30th. During September 1 to
5 September 25 season a State registration permit will be
6 required and striking all other language below during
7 the February 15 to March 15 season a Federal
8 registration permit is required and all other language
9 would be deleted from the Federal regulation book.
10 People see that on Page 2.

11
12 The Chairman is entertaining a motion
13 to adopt that.

14
15 MR. GERVAIS: So moved.

16
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Moved by Tim.

18
19 MR. ALEXIE: Second.

20
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seconded by Fred.
22 Council comments. Are you there again, Shirley?

23
24 (No response)

25
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I thought I heard
27 her there a second ago. She comes and goes. Push *6
28 Shirley so you could come back. I would like her
29 comments on this.....

30
31 MS. CLARK: Okay, here I am. I've got
32 a new phone and I'm kind of doing a lot of stuff at
33 once.

34
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right. You're
36 cooking breakfast and a Council meeting at the same
37 time?

38
39 MS. CLARK: No, I'm at the store
40 managing -- I'm trying to sell a four-wheeler and write
41 a receipt and find a phone.

42
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That sounds a heck
44 of a lot more important than this.

45
46 (Laughter)

47
48 MS. CLARK: That's why I wanted to come
49 to the meeting. Hello.

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. So you have
2 comments on this proposal? This affects your area.

3
4 MS. CLARK: Which one was that? I
5 didn't get the whole thing because I was running a
6 phone down.

7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. The proposal
9 is to eliminate the August portion of the season for
10 Unit 21E. It would go to the current State season of
11 September 1 through the 25th and there would be a State
12 registration permit would be required. Just like you
13 would have now on the State waters and State lands.
14 You would use the same permit. This hunt would be in
15 conjunction with the Federal hunt. So basically it's a
16 GASH proposal to align the State and Federal seasons.
17 Copy that?

18
19 MS. CLARK: Yes. I approve.

20
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I just wanted
22 to see if you had any additional comments. There's a
23 motion on the floor.....

24
25 MS. CLARK: No, but I do have a big
26 issue I'd like to address sooner or later when I get
27 settled down.

28
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. But we're on
30 this proposal and we have a motion on the floor to
31 adopt that proposal and the language I just stated.
32 Any further discussion.

33
34 (No comments)

35
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Got a question.

37
38 MR. SIMON: Question.

39
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those in favor of
41 Proposal WP18-36 as modified by OSM as stated on Page 2
42 of our book signify by saying aye.

43
44 IN UNISON: Aye.

45
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed, same sign.

47
48 (No opposing votes)

49
50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You have a positive
2 on that one, Shirley?

3
4 (No response)

5
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, she said she
7 was kind of in favor. Okay. The proposal as modified
8 is adopted by the Council.

9
10 MS. MAAS: You have to officially take
11 no action on 33.

12
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And no action taken
14 on 33. State that for the record.

15
16 Go ahead, Lisa.

17
18 MS. MAAS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Next
19 up is Proposal 18-33, which should be in your
20 supplemental materials binder just right after 33/36.
21 I'll give you all a moment to flip.

22
23 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: It's after 33/36.

24
25 MS. MAAS: Yeah. 18-34.

26
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, 34. You said
28 33.

29
30 MS. MAAS: Oh, did I? I'm sorry. I
31 meant 34.

32
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: 18-34, which is the
34 next proposal past the analysis that we just did. It's
35 a lynx proposal.

36
37 Go ahead, Lisa.

38
39 MS. MAAS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again
40 for the record my name is Lisa Maas and I'll be
41 presenting a summary of the analysis for Wildlife
42 Proposal 18-34. WP18-34 was submitted by Jack Reakoff
43 of Wiseman and requests that the closing date for the
44 lynx trapping season in Unit 24A be extended one month
45 from February 28th to March 31st.

46
47 The proponent states that the lynx
48 resource in Unit 24A is currently under-utilized and
49 that lengthening the season would provide additional
50

1 harvest opportunity for Federally qualified subsistence
2 users as well as reduce user confusion by aligning the
3 Federal lynx and wolverine trapping seasons in Units
4 24A and 25, reducing incidental take of lynx.

5
6 Lynx are common in Alaska. Their
7 populations fluctuate on an 8-11 year cycle in response
8 to changes in snowshoe hare abundance, their primary
9 prey. Currently lynx in Unit 24A are believed to be in
10 the upswing of their population cycle.

11
12 Lynx are an important subsistence
13 resource for Wiseman residents. Sixty percent of
14 households reported using lynx in 2011. All harvested
15 lynx are required to be sealed, which acts as a proxy
16 for population status. Lynx harvest from Unit 24A
17 fluctuates up and down in response to their population
18 cycles. From 1999 to 2016 reported lynx harvest from
19 Unit 24A ranged from a low of five in 2015 to a high of
20 286 lynx in 2000.

21
22 Adopting this proposal would provide
23 Federally qualified subsistence users with an
24 additional month of harvest opportunity. Additionally,
25 the Unit 24A lynx and wolverine trapping seasons would
26 be aligned which would reduce regulatory complexity and
27 incidental take of lynx. Although Federal and State
28 lynx trapping seasons would be misaligned.

29
30 As lynx are cyclically abundant and
31 their populations are primarily regulated by prey
32 abundance, there are no conservation concerns for this
33 proposal.

34
35 The OSM preliminary conclusion is to
36 support WP18-34.

37
38 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

39
40 I'd be happy for questions.

41
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any questions on the
43 proposal.

44
45 Pollock.

46
47 MR. SIMON: The Koyukuk River Advisory
48 Committee has been opposed to -- we always had a marten
49 and lynx season ending February 28th due to warming

50

1 weather. Marten and lynx start rubbing and shedding
2 their hair and not worth much. If this is Unit 24A,
3 that's okay, but Unit 24B where I live it would be
4 different. The fur buyers wouldn't pay too much for a
5 lynx caught in March.

6
7 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

8
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: This is 24A. Our
10 season used to go to the 31st of March and up in the
11 mountains we never have melting. We don't have melting
12 at all in March. It doesn't even break freezing until
13 the first part of April, so the lynx were in perfect
14 shape. Then began the fad to reduce lynx harvest
15 opportunities when lynx prices were 500 bucks a piece.
16 They're not 500 bucks a piece anymore, so there's not a
17 lot of huge numbers of trappers looking for lynx these
18 days. But we continue to trap until the end of March
19 for wolves so we'd have additional opportunity.

20
21 Any other questions on the proposal.

22
23 (No comments)

24
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do we have any
26 tribal comments. Oh, Darrel, do you have questions on
27 the proposal?

28
29 MR. VENT: Yeah. Under the proposed
30 regulation it says Unit 19, 21.....

31
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No. You're on the
33 wrong proposal.

34
35 MS. MAAS: Mr. Chair. It's just the
36 way the trapping regulations are written. Multiple
37 units have the same regulations. They're all listed
38 together. So currently Unit 24 is listed with Units 19
39 and 21 because the regulations are the same. This
40 proposal is to change the regulations for Unit 24A. So
41 then you can see it drops down a different line for the
42 proposal.

43
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: 24A is a relatively
45 small portion of Unit 24. It's basically the
46 northeastern portion of Unit 24. That subunit is
47 singled out as having a season extension, not the rest
48 of the unit.

49
50

1 Any State comments.

2
3 Glenn.

4
5 MR. STOUT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For
6 the record, my name is Glenn Stout. I'm the Galena
7 area biologist for the Alaska Department of Fish and
8 Game. I'll take a brief opportunity here to introduce
9 Sara Longson. She's the new assistant area biologist
10 for the Galena Management Area. If you have any
11 questions, feel free to contact Sara if you can't get a
12 hold of me.

13
14 She's stationed here in Fairbanks.
15 She's a resident of Alaska. Lived in Tok, Homer and
16 here in Fairbanks. So I think her interest and her
17 family's dedication to wildlife resources here in the
18 state makes her a great asset for the Department.

19
20 As far as the recommendations for
21 Proposal 34, the Department is neutral on this
22 proposal. The proposed changes will not result in a
23 biological concern for lynx populations in Unit 24.
24 The minimal additional harvest is expected to be within
25 the sustainable limits of the lynx population.

26
27 That's all the comments we have.

28
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Any further
30 questions of the State.

31
32 (No comments)

33
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Glenn.

35
36 Welcome to the program, Sara.

37
38 MS. LONGSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

39
40 MR. THOMAS: How would this later
41 affect the quality of the fur?

42
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: In my experience,
44 none. I trapped lynx to the end of March for years
45 before they changed the season and there's virtually no
46 difference. In fact, they're way better in March than
47 they are in November. A November lynx is like
48 worthless. It's really short and it's brown. They
49 don't even get good quality until the middle of
50

1 December. So a lot of times I don't even trap lynx in
2 November because they're no good. You want to catch a
3 good lynx, they're way better in March than they are in
4 November. They're real short, they're brown. They're
5 a late primer as far as that silvery hair.

6
7 Go ahead.

8
9 MR. THOMAS: See, the thing is in our
10 area there's not much trapping anymore. So that's why
11 I asked that question.

12
13 There's things I'm not familiar with.

14
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I've trapped since I
16 was five years old, so I've been trapping a long time
17 and seen a lot of lynx. I've caught hundreds and
18 hundreds of lynx. This year there will be thousands --
19 next year there will be thousands of lynx in the Brooks
20 Range. Literally thousands. They migrate in there.
21 There will be thousands of lynx in the Brooks Range and
22 additional harvest in March is inconsequential to the
23 lynx population.

24
25 MR. STEVENSON: Question from Donald.

26
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Donald.

28
29 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
30 was going to ask Glenn and I'm a little confused here
31 because I thought Pollock mentioned that going so late
32 in the season that -- maybe I misunderstood his comment
33 about -- I thought he mentioned that he was against it
34 because it was so late in the season. And I was just
35 wondering, you know, maybe the State's response to --
36 you know, it's probably interesting that you are
37 farther north than us. I mean obviously, but it's a
38 good question what kind of condition the fur is.

39
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Pollock stated that
41 the 24A portion. He would not want it in 24B, but 24A
42 was okay because it's actually further north. It's
43 further up the drainage. The elevation keeps rising as
44 you move up the drainage, so it's colder up there.
45 It's a lot colder than it is down the Kanuti. The
46 Kanuti gets warmed up really early, so they start to
47 melt a lot sooner than we do. So we don't have that
48 problem up there. That's why I singled it out as Unit
49 24A only.

50

1 Any other questions of the State.

2
3 (No comments)

4
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. We're good.
6 Thanks. Any tribal comments. Do we have any comments
7 on the conference call. Was there any comments at all
8 on that conference call? That's what I'm trying to
9 find out. There was a conference call in September.
10 Were any comments taken on any of these proposals? So
11 I don't have to keep reiterating that.

12
13 MS. MAAS: Through the Chair. This is
14 Lisa Maas for the record. There were a couple
15 participants in the conference call, but no specific
16 comments on any Western Interior proposals.

17
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I'll stop
19 asking that then. Anybody in the room or on the
20 conference call, comments on the proposal.

21
22 (No comments)

23
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The Koyukuk River
25 Advisory Committee has not met on any proposals.

26
27 Any written comments.

28
29 MR. STEVENSON: No, Mr. Chair.

30
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Regional Council
32 recommendation. The Chair will entertain a motion to
33 adopt Proposal 18-34.

34
35 MR. HONEA: Motion to that effect.

36
37 MR. VENT: Second.

38
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Motion and seconded.
40 Discussion.

41
42 (No comments)

43
44 MR. THOMAS: Question.

45
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The question is
47 called on.....

48
49 MR. STEVENSON: Mr. Chair. Pardon me.

50

1 Do you want to do Federal agency comments.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, Federal agency
4 comments. Missed that one. Kanuti. Is Mike here?
5 There he is right there.

6

7 Okay, Mike, sorry about that.

8

9 MR. SPINDLER: For the record, Mr.
10 Chair, Kanuti would support this proposal. Just to
11 inform the Council there is a lynx study going on at
12 several Interior Alaska Refuges participating along
13 with the University of Alaska that will get at some of
14 the population dynamics and movement patterns of lynx.
15 If the proposal gets funded and collars are purchased
16 this fall, we may have quite a bit more information in
17 a few years from now.

18

19 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks for that.
22 Appreciate that. And I guess National Park Service
23 would also have a comment. Marcy.

24

25 No comment. Okay.

26

27 We have a motion to adopt with
28 question. Those in favor of the Proposal 18-34 signify
29 by saying aye.

30

31 IN UNISON: Aye.

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed, same sign.

34

35 (No opposing votes)

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Proposal is adopted.

38

39 Our timeframe here, Zach.

40

41 MR. STEVENSON: It's five after 12:00.

42

43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Is the Council's
44 wish to break for lunch and come back at 1:00. We'll
45 recess until 1:00.

46

47 Thank you.

48

49 (Off record)

50

1 (On record)

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We'll call the
4 meeting back to order.

5

6 (Waiting for Ms. Maas)

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're on Proposal
9 18-35. Go ahead, Josh.

10

11 MR. REAM: Mr. Chair. I actually have
12 the talking points, so I can kind of pinch hit until
13 she gets in here.

14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Sure. Go right
16 ahead.

17

18 MR. REAM: Mr. Chair and Members of the
19 Council. My name is Joshua Ream. I'm an
20 anthropologist with the Office of Subsistence
21 Management out of Anchorage. The proponent for this
22 proposal was the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and
23 they request that Federal regulations for moose in Unit
24 24B be adjusted to align with the recently adopted
25 State regulations for the winter season in this area.

26

27 These changes include the addition of
28 winter hunt in the John River drainage hunt area,
29 adjustments to harvest restrictions throughout the unit
30 and a requirement for State registration permits and
31 harvest tickets rather than Federal registration
32 permits. This is part of a larger effort by ADF&G to
33 make moose regulations in this area more manageable
34 given the checkerboard land status.

35

36 Should I pass this on to Lisa at the
37 moment?

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Everything's good
40 now, Lisa?

41

42 MS. MAAS: Yeah, I'm sorry, Mr. Chair.
43 I asked permission to go pay for my meal and I just
44 made it back.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. But I
47 thought you were paying at the desk here and that was
48 like 15 minutes ago.

49

50

1 MS. MAAS: No, I had to go over to
2 Pike's Landing and go to the bathroom. I'm sorry.

3
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. We're on a
5 tight agenda here, so I figured I'd just start the ball
6 rolling on this proposal. So no big deal. He read the
7 overview of the proposal. So we needed to get the ball
8 rolling. I thought it was going to be like a couple
9 minutes or something. I thought you were paying at the
10 desk here. No big deal. Everything is good.

11
12 You got your page now, Dennis?

13
14 MR. THOMAS: Got it.

15
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: He read your
17 overview. So continue with basically your overview of
18 the proposal.

19
20 MS. MAAS: Okay. Again, I apologize
21 for that. I'm going to start in with regulatory
22 history. This proposal is part of a larger effort by
23 ADF&G to make the moose regulations in Unit 24B more
24 manageable. In 2016, ADF&G submitted Proposal 96 to
25 the Alaska Board of Game requesting consolidation of
26 all Unit 24B moose hunt areas and extension of the
27 winter hunt to the entire unit. The Board of Game
28 adopted Proposal 96 in February 2017 and this proposal
29 requests similar changes.

30
31 Moose occur at low densities within
32 Unit 24B, but populations are believed to be stable.
33 Since 1999 surveys in Kanuti National Wildlife Refuge
34 have indicated high bull/cow and calf/cow ratios.
35 However, surveys in Gates of the Arctic National Park
36 and Preserve have yielded lower density and
37 productivity estimates.

38
39 Moose are an important subsistence
40 resource to local residents and most communities across
41 most survey years over 80 percent of households
42 reported using moose in a given year while many moose
43 harvested in Unit 24B are not reported. Only two moose
44 have been reported during the winter season since its
45 establishment in 2010. Additionally, few moose
46 harvests have been reported in the upper drainage of
47 Unit 24B near the Brooks Range where moose density and
48 productivity appear to be lower.

49
50

1 Adopting this proposal would establish
2 a winter season in the John River drainage hunt area,
3 which would provide additional harvest opportunity to
4 Federally qualified subsistence users although harvest
5 would be restricted between December 15th and 31st to
6 one antlered bull rather than one moose.

7
8 State harvest tickets would be required
9 for the fall moose season while State registration
10 permits would be required for the winter season.
11 Aligning State and Federal reporting requirements and
12 winter season dates would reduce user confusion and law
13 enforcement concerns caused by the checkerboard pattern
14 of land ownership in the area. However, concurrence is
15 needed from the State to allow the use of State harvest
16 tickets outside of State seasons and on Federal lands
17 closed to those hunting under State regulations.

18
19 No conservation concerns exist for this
20 proposal as no increases in harvest are expected due to
21 the historically low moose harvest during the winter.

22
23 The OSM preliminary conclusion is to
24 support WP18-35 with modification to retain the phrase
25 hunting under these regulations.

26
27 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

28
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any questions on the
30 proposal from the Council.

31
32 Darrel.

33
34 MR. VENT: Kanuti is not -- is that
35 around the Nulato area, Koyukuk area?

36
37 MS. MAAS: This is for the John River
38 drainage. There's a map on Page 7 of the analysis. So
39 you can see the checked hash if you're on Page 7. That
40 upriver drainage from Bettles.

41
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Zach.

43
44 MR. STEVENSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
45 To Member Vent's question I did want to point out that
46 Mike Spindler is also available to address any
47 questions that would affect 18-35.

48
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. We'll get
50

1 that under Federal. Darrel.

2

3 MR. VENT: Yeah, it's just that I was
4 kind of confused with this wording here. Using a State
5 harvest ticket on a Federal registration permit is
6 what's, you know.....

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It makes one permit.
9 A hunter would have to have two different permits now.
10 So this would make just one permit. That's what the
11 objective of that is. Glenn Stout is here. He will
12 speak to the proposal also.

13

14 MR. VENT: Okay. It's in Pollock's
15 area, so I was just wondering where that was at.

16

17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. That's in
18 24B. Clear on the proposal. Did we have any tribal
19 comments from Allakaket Tribe, Zach?

20

21 Oh, go ahead, Dennis.

22

23 MR. THOMAS: What is the purpose of
24 this?

25

26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, I'll have the
27 State come up to the table. Glenn. So ADF&G comments.
28 Sort of give a more finer detail. A little bit of
29 confusion here with some of the Council Members.

30

31 Go ahead.

32

33 MR. STOUT: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
34 Glenn Stout with Alaska Department of Fish and Game.
35 Just to address the two primary questions. The issue
36 of permitting is to make a single permit. It's not
37 uncommon that we have Federal hunts where the permit
38 that is required is a State mechanism. So this is not
39 anything new in that respect, having a State reporting
40 mechanism. It just helps us consolidate the
41 information as far as harvest reporting to where it's
42 all put into one database, so it improves our ability
43 to manage in that respect.

44

45 As far as what the proposal
46 accomplishes, what it will do is it will help the
47 hunter on the ground only have to worry about one set
48 of regulations to look to because the State and the
49 Federal regulations will be lined up. It will also

50

1 help them not have to worry about where they're at as
2 far as land status because both the Federal and State
3 land will have the same season, so they won't have to
4 worry about which side of the line they happen to be
5 hunting at any given time.
6

7 So this will just help simplify a lot
8 of things that have been going on for quite a while
9 actually. I thought the Staff's analysis of that did a
10 real good job showing how we've been working on this
11 for quite a while to progress towards this point to
12 where the seasons and the areas and the permitting are
13 now a lot simpler for the hunter.
14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Darrel, you've got a
16 question.
17

18 MR. VENT: Yeah. What I was trying to
19 lead to is, you know, it's a Federally qualified
20 subsistence use area. The users use that for
21 subsistence. As long as it -- it's not explained if
22 it's opening to other qualified users or anything.
23 It's just for a certain area.
24

25 That's all I'm concerned about on
26 there.
27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Glenn.
29

30 MR. STOUT: Mr. Chair. Member Vent.
31 Yeah, this doesn't change any of who's qualified. This
32 just makes it for Federally subsistence qualified
33 hunters. They're only going to have to worry about one
34 piece of paper.
35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Dennis.
37

38 MR. THOMAS: My thing is the length of
39 the seasons. August 1 to December 14th, December 15th
40 to April 15th. I've never heard of anything like this
41 before.
42

43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We went through a
44 long process to get those seasons. They're winter
45 hunts designed for those in Unit 24B. The upper
46 portion of that drainage of John River is basically
47 lightly hunted by Nunamiut people out of Anaktuvuk
48 Pass. Lightly. I'll state that explicitly because
49 they primarily harvest caribou.
50

1 The winter hunt is for the people of
2 Allakaket primarily and Bettles, Evansville. So
3 there's not a huge amount of harvest. This is not a
4 high-density human population area. These are low-
5 density human populations with low density moose that
6 need to have longer seasons to be able to meet
7 subsistence needs. That's what those seasons are
8 about.

9
10 MR. THOMAS: So the density of the
11 animals is enough to support this length of a season?

12
13 MR. STOUT: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
14 Member Thomas. I think Jack's point was right on.
15 What we've demonstrated, because we've already had this
16 winter hunt for seven years now, is that it provides an
17 opportunity, but it is not used very often. It's kind
18 of a back-up season I think is the way that we thought
19 about it originally. If a hunter wasn't able to get
20 their moose in the fall, this provided a winter
21 opportunity.

22
23 Under the State portion of it, there
24 are safeguards that are in place. Although it seems
25 like a long season, you can't get access to the area
26 very easily because it doesn't include 24A. So off the
27 haul road there's no access. You can't use airplanes
28 because that's a special hunt condition of that winter
29 hunt, so they can't use airplanes in the area. Of
30 course it's very dark and very cold for most of that
31 time and that really restricts use.

32
33 We have bull/cow ratios on the order of
34 65-70 bulls per 100 cows, so the population can support
35 additional harvest. I think we demonstrated already
36 through the State permitting that this is certainly
37 something we could support as far as a sustainable
38 harvest.

39
40 MR. THOMAS: The permitting for this is
41 to the local people? In other words, some guy from
42 Anchorage come up there and wanted to get a permit to
43 go hunting over there, you know, so he drives up with
44 his car with four, five snowmachines on the back and
45 vroom, run over there and.....

46
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: There's an all-
48 terrain vehicle restriction on the Dalton Highway
49 within five miles of each side of the road. You can't
50

1 utilize all-terrain vehicles to transport hunters, game
2 parts or gear.

3
4 MR. THOMAS: I understand that, but I'm
5 saying this area up there. What would stop somebody
6 from outside coming in and doing this?

7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It's open, but they
9 have winter hunts in Unit 20A and 20B, so they have
10 winter hunting opportunity down here. People don't go
11 all the way to the Brooks Range to go winter moose
12 hunting. They go up there to go caribou hunting. I
13 mean there is some participation, but it's really small
14 nowadays with the kind of restrictions they have on the
15 hunt.

16
17 Glenn.

18
19 MR. THOMAS: All right. If I could say
20 just that the length of the seasons and open, all this
21 and all that, it just seems strange to me because we
22 don't have anything like this back there. We used to
23 have a November hunt and then we had a February hunt
24 and I think they did away with the November one and I
25 think they did away with the February one back there
26 too. Maybe they'll open it again. If this is what I
27 -- I say Jesus Christ -- I mean goodness sake, you're
28 looking at a six-month season, you know.

29
30 Okay, go ahead.

31
32 Enough said.

33
34 MR. STOUT: Mr. Chair.....

35
36 MR. THOMAS: I'm in the dark. I just
37 can't comprehend this length of time for a moose
38 season.

39
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You have hundreds of
41 people that could participate. Allakaket is, what, 150
42 people, 140 people. Evansville is 25. Bettles is like
43 20 maybe. We're talking about low participation in a
44 huge country. We're not talking about hundreds of
45 people coming out of Aniak to come hunt over the top of
46 you. You're mixing apples and oranges.

47
48 Go ahead, Glenn.

49
50

1 MR. STOUT: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
2 Member Thomas. I think your concerns were something
3 that we were cautious about when we initially adopted
4 the season and that's why we recommended to the Board
5 that there be a sunset clause initially to gauge that
6 interest. We watched that very closely and we had
7 people interested in the hunt, but it was limited to
8 about 25, 30 per year that people were interested in
9 the hunt and they applied for and got the permit, but
10 as soon as they saw what it took to get there, they
11 didn't utilize the permits and we never saw a single
12 moose harvested outside of the local harvest.

13
14 I think it looks appealing and it shows
15 up on the books, but when people investigate it and
16 what it really means to go up there in the dark at 30
17 and 40 below, it's not that much of an opportunity if
18 you live outside.

19
20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Pollock.

21
22 MR. SIMON: Yes. The opportunity is
23 there to take a moose in the wintertime, but I'll tell
24 you this in wintertime there antlers fall off on the
25 bull and you have to have some kind of binoculars or
26 guess that is a bull moose. If it's a cow moose and
27 you shoot it, you're in trouble. Besides it's 40 below
28 out there and people go out in the boat in fall time
29 before freeze-up to enjoy the weather and look for
30 moose.

31
32 The opportunity to take a moose in
33 December -- there was only one moose taken a couple
34 years ago during that season. Besides the bull moose
35 -- you have to take a bull moose. We used to have cow
36 season years ago, but the population dropped, so no cow
37 season. But in the wintertime, December, January, a
38 bull moose has lost all his fat and the bull moose
39 around that time is tough meat. The opportunity is
40 there to take a moose, but not too many people go out.

41
42 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

43
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Pollock.

45
46 Fred.

47
48 MR. ALEXIE: Mr. Chair. I'd like to
49 further comment on that. I know a lot of my friends
50

1 from that area come out and they actually tell us they
2 can't get no moose because the moose aren't there in
3 their area. But we're opening this area here for that
4 winter hunt. They got a chance there to feed the
5 family, feed the village. I've got no complaints about
6 that opening, the time and the length of it. It's for
7 their benefit, the people of that area. Bettles,
8 Hughes, all that area.

9
10 Thank you.

11
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Fred.

13
14 Don.

15
16 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
17 just had a question for Glenn. I actually kind of like
18 the idea of coming in line with the State and Federal
19 because it takes confusion away where you're at. Am I
20 on the checkerboard square of BLM, Native allotment or
21 Doyon or whatever you have out there.

22
23 But I was just wondering -- I mean I
24 realize that probably the winter take is not -- has it
25 been consistently about 10, 15, 20? I realize we're
26 not talking about big numbers here, correct?

27
28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Glenn.

29
30 MR. STOUT: Through the Chair. Member
31 Honea. Yeah, I think we've had two moose reported
32 harvested for the whole time that we've had that
33 season.

34
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So the proposal is
36 clear. The State gave their comment. Kanuti.

37
38 Oh, you've got further comment?

39
40 Go ahead.

41
42 MR. STOUT: Yeah. Mr. Chair, I was
43 just trying to respond to the questions initially.
44 I'll go ahead and give the State's comments.

45
46 The Department submitted and supports
47 this proposal. The proposed language will align the
48 State and Federal hunt boundaries for the winter moose
49 season in Unit 24B, which was recently adopted by the
50

1 Board of Game. The alignment will eliminate confusion
2 in areas with a checkerboard land ownership pattern,
3 which occurs near the villages of Bettles, Evansville,
4 Allakaket and Alatna.

5
6 Under current regulations subsistence
7 hunters may unintentionally violate hunting regulations
8 due to that differing land status. The proposed
9 language will also eliminate the need for a Federal
10 permit for any of the Unit 24 hunts during that winter
11 period and simplify permitting for the Federally
12 qualified users. Hunters will only be required to
13 possess a State permit to participate in both the State
14 and Federal seasons.

15
16 That's the end of our comments.

17
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. Is that
19 clear?

20
21 (No comments)

22
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Kanuti. Go ahead,
24 Mike.

25
26 MR. SPINDLER: Mr. Chair. Fellow
27 Council Members. It might help if I painted a bit of a
28 historical picture here. In the mid '90s to late '90s
29 there was a Koyukuk River Moose Management Plan, which
30 was a very inclusive process involving all the
31 stakeholders. One of the things the plan did is it
32 eliminated a cow moose hunt in that area and that's
33 because it was felt by most of the experts that looked
34 at the population that it was already low and it
35 couldn't sustain a cow harvest.

36
37 That was very difficult for the people
38 in the villages because there was no opportunity for a
39 backup, kind of a desperation, I don't have any meat
40 situation. So it was very painful, especially in the
41 years when the fall harvest success was really low. So
42 it was requested of us probably around 2000 or 2003 or
43 4, somewhere in there, that we try a five-day winter
44 hunt bulls only. That was tried and that wasn't a long
45 enough period. There was a lot of interest, but people
46 didn't succeed in encountering a moose.

47
48 So I view this as a hunt that would
49 afford the opportunity of someone that's going to their
50

1 wood lot, someone on the trapline, they see an antlered
2 bull, opportunistically they didn't fill their harvest
3 ticket during the fall hunt, it gives them that one
4 last chance to get a moose that season and feed their
5 family. Something that the Kanuti Refuge highly
6 supports.

7
8 We've worked closely with Alaska
9 Department of Fish and Game, Mr. Stout, over the years
10 to try and fine tune this so it is a reasonable good
11 opportunity for the folks that really need a moose, but
12 we recognize now that it's not getting overrun by
13 non-local hunters.

14
15 Furthermore, in Allakaket, Kanuti
16 National Wildlife Refuge contracts with a tribal
17 employee, Steven Bergman, one of the elders in
18 Allakaket, his position that the tribe has hired that
19 we fund and he is the licensed vender for all State of
20 Alaska licenses and harvest tags. Also has been for
21 the Federal registration permit hunts as well.

22
23 So all the people in the largest
24 villages that would be participating in this hunt have
25 access to up-to-date information and Steven does an
26 admirable job of making sure that the hunters are
27 prepared, they know where they could hunt, where the
28 boundaries are.

29
30 I don't see any complicating things
31 that would cause me any concern at all. I just thought
32 that maybe a little bit of historical background would
33 help the Council Members understand why we got to this
34 point at this date.

35
36 In summary, Kanuti Refuge highly
37 supports this alignment with the State on this.

38
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Mike.
40 Appreciate that perspective.

41
42 MR. SPINDLER: I have one other item
43 that I would like to add when you're done deliberating.

44
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. It was good
46 to give an overview because Dennis seemed to be
47 confused about where this came from. You're new to this
48 Council, so this has been like a long process for
49 nearly 20 years. So it was good to give that overview
50

1 of that historical perspective.

2

3

Any questions for Kanuti Refuge.

4

5

(No comments)

6

7

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seeing none.

8

9

Go ahead.

10

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MR. SPINDLER: I've had the pleasure of working with this Council for several decades, since it was formed in the early 1990s. As of this January I'll be retiring from 40 years of service with the Fish and Wildlife Service, so I wanted to let the Council Members know.

I've really enjoyed working with you on difficult issues like we just described. Not enough moose meat to go around in the wintertime. We worked through it. It takes time, it takes patience, it takes understanding, it takes trust, it takes communications. But 40 years service and I'm looking for some other endeavors going forward and I just wanted to personally let the Council Members know.

Finally, Lisa, you've done a great job on your staff analyses. I really think you present the data very clearly and understandably for all concerned. So thanks for your work on this and thank you, Council Members. I know you serve as volunteers. Thank you for all the work you've done to better subsistence opportunities for rural residents in the state of Alaska.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Mike I wanted to state that I've been on the Council since '93, as some of the members have. You worked out of Galena for many years, Kanuti for many years, and we really appreciate all the time and energy you've spent in working with this Council and with the resources.

Appreciate that.

Thank you.

MR. SPINDLER: You're welcome. It's been my honor.

1 (Applause)

2
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So as far as
4 advisory committees, the advisory committee has not met
5 on this proposal. The Gates of the Arctic Subsistence
6 Resource Commission did have a conference call on this
7 proposal and supported the simplification and
8 permitting process systems having it under the State
9 reporting requirements. So the Gates of the Arctic
10 Subsistence Resource Commission did support this
11 proposal.

12
13 Do we have any written comments, Zach?

14
15 MR. STEVENSON: No, Mr. Chair.

16
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Public testimony. I
18 don't see anybody from that area in the room. Regional
19 Council's recommendations. The Chair will entertain a
20 motion to adopt Proposal WP18-35.

21
22 MR. HONEA: I so move.

23
24 MR. VENT: Second.

25
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seconded by Darrel.
27 Discussion on the proposal.

28
29 MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman, I have a
30 comment.

31
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Ray.

33
34 MR. COLLINS: You mentioned concern
35 about the length of that season, but this is really a
36 more appropriate for subsistence users because when we
37 have to set dates, especially for winter hunts, they
38 cause real problems because it may be 40 below during
39 that week and so on, where the next week it may be
40 higher, you know, with all the fluctuation. This gives
41 them an opportunity to pick when it's more appropriate
42 to hunt, which is more traditional.

43
44 You go out when the weather will allow
45 it. You don't have to look at a calendar and say well
46 I've got this much time. So I'm glad that at least the
47 resources in this area will sustain this kind of
48 harvest and you don't have a lot of outside pressure.
49 I wish we had more flexibility like that in other areas

50

1 especially when nobody can go out. When you create a
2 short winter season, then nobody can go out. They
3 really haven't been given an opportunity then.

4
5 So there needs to be in some of the
6 Federal regs an opportunity for the local person to
7 extend that season without going through a regulatory
8 process or something as a tool for consideration in the
9 future, you know. They'd be able to say, well, there
10 wasn't any participation. We'll extend it another week
11 or whatever.

12
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: A letter of
14 delegated authority they call that.

15
16 Dennis.

17
18 MR. THOMAS: It helps when you
19 understand the issues.

20
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. Well, we
22 weren't through all of the informational process. We
23 can't start deliberating the proposal off the top of
24 our head. That's why we've got to get the State and
25 all the agencies, all the information out in front of
26 us. Then we can formulate the way we're going to vote.

27
28 I do agree with Ray. The first time it
29 was five days. Well, it was 40, 50 below and nobody
30 went out. Yeah, nobody is going to go out. But if you
31 have a longer opportunity period then you can pick the
32 weather especially for the winter hunts or any time.
33 People put in for one week to go hunting in the fall
34 time.

35
36 I don't hunt that way. I hunt when the
37 conditions are proper to where I can kill a moose and
38 put the meat away when it's dry. I'm not going to
39 shoot a moose in pouring rain because I'm stuck in two
40 days of a weekend or something. You've got to have the
41 right kind of conditions to put the meat up right or
42 sheep hunting or whatever I'm doing. I hunt when the
43 conditions are right.

44
45 You have to have a long enough
46 opportunity to where you can do that. So this gives
47 that. It's not a cow, but at least it's something. If
48 I had no moose, I'd take a bull. We used to have a two
49 moose limit when I was a kid. Any moose, two moose.

50

1 They built the haul road and we're down to real short
2 seasons and one bull and we're lucky to get that.
3 Happy to get that.

4
5 So any further discussion on the
6 proposal.

7
8 MS. PELKOLA: Question.

9
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The question is
11 called. Those in favor of the Proposal 18-35 -- hold
12 on. Back up. The OSM preliminary conclusion is to
13 retain specific language hunting under these
14 regulations. That is because of specific regulatory
15 process within OSM.

16
17 Lisa.

18
19 MS. MAAS: Through the Chair. Yeah,
20 that's more of an administrative modification. I think
21 it just says retaining that phrase will be
22 inconsequential. It's not contradictory to the use of
23 a State permit. So I think it's just clarifying that
24 we're talking about Federal regulations and not State.
25 So it's really more of an administrative thing.

26
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We'll stay with the
28 proposal as written. So that's the motion on the
29 floor.

30
31 Those in favor of the motion signify by
32 saying aye.

33
34 IN UNISON: Aye.

35
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed, same sign.

37
38 (No opposing votes)

39
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The proposal is
41 adopted. So we're on Proposal -- go ahead, Lisa.

42
43 MS. MAAS: 32.

44
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, 32.

46
47 MS. MAAS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So
48 now we're going to go back to WP18-32. This is kind of
49 part of the suite of the Northern Caribou Herd

50

1 proposals, so there's a lot of overlapping information
2 in the biology and harvest history between 32 and
3 several other proposals.

4
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So that's the first
6 proposal after the calendars in our packet. That's
7 pretty lengthy.

8
9 MS. MAAS: I think that's the longest
10 proposal and analysis in OSM history.

11
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Apparently. That's
13 big.

14
15 MS. MAAS: Has everyone found it?

16
17 (Pause)

18
19 MS. MAAS: Getting there.

20
21 (Pause)

22
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Lisa.

24
25 MS. MAAS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again
26 for the record my name is Lisa Maas. Again there are
27 five proposals concerning caribou regulations across
28 the ranges of the Western Arctic, Teshekpuk and Central
29 Arctic Caribou Herds, including WP18-32, 45, 46/47,
30 48/49 and 57. So these proposals will be presented
31 consecutively and overlapping information, such as
32 caribou biology and harvest, will only be presented
33 once to reduce repetition and redundancy.

34
35 Some of these proposals directly affect
36 the Western Interior Region while other proposals are
37 crossovers and are being presented because some Western
38 Interior residents have a customary and traditional use
39 determination for caribou in the affected area.

40
41 First up is Wildlife Proposal 18-32.
42 This proposal was submitted by the Western Interior
43 Council and requests changes to the caribou season
44 dates in Units 21D, 22, 23, 24, 25A (West), 26A, and
45 26B.

46
47 The proponent requested these season
48 changes to protect cows during the migration, avoid
49 migration deflections due to hunting and prohibit bull

50

1 harvest during the rut when bulls are unpalatable. The
2 proponent also intends to submit an proposal to the
3 Alaska Board of Game to align State caribou seasons
4 with these proposed Federal seasons.

5
6 In 2015, the Alaska Board of Game
7 restricted caribou regulations in Units 21D, 22, 23,
8 24, 26A and 26B in response to population declines of
9 the Western Arctic and Teshekpuk Caribou Herds. In
10 2016, the Federal Subsistence Board adopted similar
11 regulation restrictions across the ranges of these
12 declining herds.

13
14 A lot of time and effort were spent in
15 crafting both Federal and State regulation restrictions
16 by herd and unit in response to local needs and
17 seasonal caribou movements. In 2017, the Board of Game
18 restricted regulations in Unit 26B in response to a
19 population decline of the Central Arctic Caribou Herd.

20
21 This proposal affects units within the
22 ranges of the Western Arctic, Teshekpuk and Central
23 Arctic Caribou Herds. Caribou populations naturally
24 fluctuate over time and all three herds are currently
25 declining.

26
27 The Western Arctic population peaked at
28 490,000 caribou in 2003 and has since declined over 50
29 percent to approximately 201,000 caribou in 2016.
30 Bull/cow ratios are within management objectives.

31
32 The Teshekpuk Herd peaked at 69,000
33 caribou in 2008 and has since declined 40 percent to
34 41,500 caribou in 2015. The 2016 bull/cow ratio of 28
35 bulls per 100 cows was the lowest ratio since 1991 and
36 is below management objectives.

37
38 The Central Arctic Herd peaked at
39 70,000 caribou in 2010 and has since declined almost 70
40 percent to 22,400 caribou in 2016. The 2016 bull/cow
41 ratio of 39 bulls per 100 cows is just below State
42 management objectives.

43
44 Caribou migration routes, timing and
45 the number of caribou migrating on a particular route
46 vary each year. Different caribou herds also have
47 different migration patterns and timing. Caribou have
48 been a vital nutritional and cultural resource for the
49 Inupiaq of the Seward Peninsula, Northwest Arctic and
50

1 North Slope regions for thousands of years and continue
2 to dominate the subsistence harvest across most of the
3 region.

4
5 A long-held cultural practice is to
6 allow lead caribou to establish migratory pathways
7 undisturbed. Local hunters have expressed concerns
8 over aircraft and non-local hunters disrupting caribou
9 migration, which has caused user conflicts in the area.

10
11 Harvest from the Western Arctic Herd
12 approximates the estimated harvestable surplus for this
13 herd. In 2016 the harvestable surplus was about 12,000
14 caribou. The long-term estimated annual harvest also
15 averages about 12,000 caribou. On average, local
16 hunters within the range of the Western Arctic Herd
17 account for 95 percent of the total Western Arctic
18 harvest while non-local hunters account for 5 percent.
19 Most Western Arctic Caribou are harvested in Unit 23.

20
21 Harvest from the Teshekpuk Herd may
22 already exceed the estimated harvestable surplus for
23 this herd. Currently the harvestable surplus estimate
24 is 2,500 caribou. However, the estimated total harvest
25 is about 3,000 caribou. On average, local hunters
26 account for 99.7 percent of the Teshekpuk harvest while
27 non-local hunters only account for .3 percent of the
28 harvest. The vast majority of Teshekpuk Caribou are
29 harvested in Unit 26A.

30
31 The harvestable surplus from the
32 Central Arctic herd decreased dramatically with the
33 recent population decline and has possibly been
34 exceeded. However the 2017 restrictions to State
35 regulations were geared at reducing harvest to
36 sustainable levels. The vast majority of Central
37 Arctic Caribou are harvested in Unit 26B by non-
38 Federally qualified users. Most of the local harvest
39 is by Nuiqsut residents. Most of the caribou harvest
40 in Unit 25A West is from the Porcupine Caribou Herd.

41
42 Adopting this proposal would increase
43 regulatory complexity by misaligning State and Federal
44 caribou seasons across several units. The effect of
45 these regulation changes would be limited as all users
46 could hunt under State regulations. One size fits all
47 regulations are not appropriate. Two years ago a lot
48 of time and effort were spent in crafting caribou
49 regulations specific to caribou herd seasonal movements
50

1 and local needs.

2
3 For example, may-be-announced seasons
4 were established in Unit 22 as caribou presence is less
5 predictable in that unit. Unit 26A was divided into a
6 north hunt area geared toward the Teshekpuk Herd and a
7 southern hunt area geared toward the Western Arctic
8 Herd. The Unit 24C and 24D cow season does not open
9 until September because caribou are not present in
10 those units during the summer. The Unit 26A bull
11 season opens December 6th as North Slope residents
12 consider bulls palatable by then.

13
14 More time is needed to assess the
15 effectiveness of these regulation changes before making
16 additional changes. While the proposed season changes
17 may avoid migration deflections and aid in population
18 recovery by reducing cow harvest, migrating cow caribou
19 could still be disturbed by users hunting bulls and it
20 would put a substantial burden on Federally qualified
21 subsistence users who must now distinguish between bull
22 and cow caribou. Federal regulations would also become
23 more restrictive than State regulations eliminating the
24 subsistence priority.

25
26 The OSM preliminary conclusion is to
27 oppose Proposal WP18-32.

28
29 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

30
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any questions on the
32 OSM proposal and analysis.

33
34 Go ahead, Darrel.

35
36 MR. VENT: Yeah, just talking about a
37 lot of decline in this population here. As you know,
38 when you get decline in something there's also the
39 predator factor in this because a lot of times those
40 bulls are the breeding bulls and so they -- what I
41 heard from over on the Kobuk area is that those
42 predators are so bad that they chase them up in the
43 hills and they didn't come down out of there, so that's
44 why we didn't get no caribou over in our area. They
45 just hid there. They couldn't do nothing with all the
46 predators.

47
48 So people were catching predators, but
49 it's pretty spendy to buy snowmachine parts and stuff.

50

1 The problem is developed, but it always falls back on
2 the local people to take out these predators. That's
3 cause and effect what happened with overall all the
4 users. For them over there it's a necessity. They've
5 got to have that caribou.

6
7 I hope that everything starts looking
8 toward making sure the herds increase again because we
9 have our use over there in our area for the caribou and
10 we don't only use the meat. We use the skin and horns
11 to make scrapers and everything. So it's become -- you
12 know, it's a sad thing to see that we're losing
13 something. It's something like what happened to the
14 king salmon maybe. You get a lot of predators and it's
15 hard for them to come back.

16
17 Thanks, Jack.

18
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Darrel. Any
20 questions on the proposal to Lisa.

21
22 (No comments)

23
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No. So Alaska
25 Department of Fish and Game comments on the proposal.

26
27 MR. BUTLER: Mr. Chair. This is Lem
28 Butler on the phone.

29
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Lem, go ahead.

31
32 MR. BUTLER: How you doing again. I'm
33 Assistant Director. This proposal obviously effects
34 many herds, so I think that's why I was saddled with
35 giving an initial recommendation. There may be some
36 biologists who can give you more detailed technical
37 information relative to the herds if we need to go
38 there.

39
40 Our initial recommendation, which again
41 is preliminary at this time, is to oppose this
42 proposal. In large part it's because it's just so
43 broad. It affects a lot of herds. In addition to the
44 Western Arctic herd, the Teshekpuk and the Central
45 Arctic Herd it actually has some overlap with the
46 Porcupine Caribou Herd ranges as well, which I'll get
47 into in a minute.

48
49 But each of these herds have different

50

1 biological considerations and concerns. Although we
2 acknowledge three of those herds, the Western Arctic,
3 Teshekpuk and Central Arctic have declined, again their
4 status is a little different. We're seeing a lot of
5 positive signs from the Western Arctic Herd that
6 suggested it may be stabilizing. We're certainly not
7 in the decline that we've seen that we would have
8 brought to your attention five or more years ago.

9
10 Teshekpuk again declining, Central
11 Arctic Herd took a large decline, but again we are
12 seeing some positive signs there as well that may
13 indicate that you won't see the same rapid decline that
14 we suspect occurred going into the future. Of course
15 the Porcupine Herd is stable. So again different
16 considerations.

17
18 You know, a lot of the differences in
19 seasons has to do with distribution, which I think the
20 OSM analysis pointed out. Different people have access
21 to the caribou at different times. When you take such a
22 wide sweeping approach to again four herds over such a
23 large area, it's easy to lose that local nuance and we
24 think that's important to consider as you consider this
25 proposal.

26
27 We do understand that diversion is a
28 big concern for local users, the idea that people,
29 outside hunters in particular and their airplanes, may
30 be influencing the distribution of the caribou in the
31 fall. So we certainly appreciate where this proposal
32 comes from as well as the idea the cow harvest isn't --
33 you know, generally when we're talking about decline in
34 herds, we are also trying to minimize cow harvest, but
35 as was noted it does put some burden on the resource
36 user to distinguish between bulls and cows and that may
37 lead to some law enforcement issues that are
38 unintentional kind of consequences. Just mistakes that
39 occur in the field when it comes to judging caribou
40 that may put some resource users in a poor position.

41
42 We also note that the Board of Game has
43 made recent changes to address a lot of these concerns
44 relative to seasons and bag limits. There's probably
45 going to be -- you know, it's probably hard to forecast
46 how some of the changes will affect the number of
47 hunters in the field, but I do think that the Board of
48 Game has made some changes in some of these areas that
49 will affect that, which I'm not going to say that
50

1 that's going to radically change the landscape by any
2 means, but that may to some extent address some of the
3 concerns about diversion if there are fewer hunters in
4 the field.

5
6 So what we'd really encourage this
7 Council to do is -- you know, as was also noted, we've
8 gone through this period where we're changing the regs
9 so quickly and we're trying to keep up with the
10 conservation concerns, but it really does create a very
11 dynamic landscape for the resource users. We'd really
12 encourage trying to keep the regulations as stable as
13 possible.

14
15 We've recently introduced a
16 registration permit to try to capture harvest and
17 quantify it better, assess the effects of human harvest
18 on the population. Again, the Board of Game has made
19 several changes to address conservation concerns, make
20 the hunt more stable or make sure that the harvest is
21 sustainable.

22
23 We think that holding the course for a
24 period of time -- it seems like every time we go
25 through a Federal Board of Game process or State Board
26 of Game process someone changes it and we're constantly
27 trying to align and make it easier for resource users.
28 I don't know. I think a slow approach may be warranted
29 before we make any big jumps.

30
31 The only other thing I have to add is
32 that it was noted in our Department comments that while
33 we are aligning Federal regulations in Units 21D, 24,
34 25A West and 26B with Western Arctic Herd regulations
35 it's an area that primarily sees Central Arctic and
36 Porcupine Caribou Herds in those areas. So again
37 that's just that same caution. You know, it's a pretty
38 broad brush, so you may be altering things
39 unintentionally without getting that local kind of, you
40 know, taking this piece by piece and looking at it at a
41 finer level.

42
43 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

44
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Lem.

46
47 Darrel, you've got a comment on
48 his.....

49
50

1 MR. VENT: Yeah, just one comment on
2 that, you know. It's pretty critical that we get that
3 limit number in there. It's just, you know, we've got
4 everything in there pieced together when there's some
5 pretty vital information that we need to put in there.
6 It's kind of hard to just go through all this and, you
7 know, like you said, you've got to put in there pieces
8 and getting that limit in there is what we're really
9 kind of stressing toward right now.

10
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other questions
12 for the State.

13
14 (No comments)

15
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seeing none. Thank
17 you, Lem.

18
19 MR. BUTLER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

20
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Gates of the Arctic
22 Subsistence Resource Commission met on this proposal,
23 but there was no conclusion, no recommendation. The
24 Koyukuk River Advisory did not meet on this proposal.

25
26 Were there any other advisory
27 committees, Zach.

28
29 MR. STEVENSON: No, Mr. Chair.

30
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any written comments
32 on this proposal.

33
34 MR. STEVENSON: No.

35
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Public testimony.
37 Anybody on the phone care to comment.

38
39 (No comments)

40
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Regional Council
42 recommendation. We'll take the proposal up in the
43 positive. The Chair will entertain a motion to adopt
44 proposal WP18-32.

45
46 MR. SIMON: So moved.

47
48 MR. GERVAIS: So moved. Second.

49
50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Moved by Pollock,
2 seconded by Tim. Sort of an overview of the proposal.
3 We submitted the formulation of this process at our
4 spring meeting. The Board of Game was in session. We
5 didn't know what the Board was going to do and I was
6 concerned that there would be too much additional cow
7 harvest opportunity. Fortunately the Board of Game
8 made significant reductions in 26B, eliminating cow
9 harvest entirely.

10
11 Yes, hunters have a problem
12 distinguishing small bulls from cows and there were
13 multiple cow caribou that were brought into wiseman by
14 the protection that were taken away from hunters that
15 shot cows that weren't supposed to be shooting them.
16 They seize them and bring the meat in and give it away.

17
18 So fortunately that happened, but the
19 basics of caribou are cow caribou lead migration and
20 bull harvest in the fall occurs primarily in the tail
21 end of those. I don't know if you've seen caribou
22 migrate. It will be cow caribou out in front, there
23 will be hundreds of caribou and the bulls drag in the
24 back. In the fall, they're dragging in the back of
25 those herds.

26
27 So the bull harvest does not affect
28 where those caribou are going. Cows lead migration.
29 The undercurrent is that all cows know where they're
30 going to go. It's like, no, there's lead cows and they
31 have an inner digital gland that's real dominant and
32 they're specifically in cows that if you shoot them,
33 you can cause the herd to move significantly. I've
34 seen herds move over five, ten miles just from the lead
35 cows getting shot.

36
37 That happened big time in 2010 on the
38 Ivashak River. Those guys went up there, they had a
39 big cow caribou limit. July 1 they could shoot those
40 lead cows. As soon as they showed up, we're going to
41 kill cows. They'd shoot those lead cows. The caribou
42 were moving all around. The air taxis told me some of
43 the caribou went all the way back out to the coast and
44 went all the way around to the Itkillik River. It
45 completed deflected that movement. They went way to
46 the east, they went into the head of the middle fork of
47 the Chandalar.

48
49 Unit 25A is predominantly -- and too
50

1 bad Beth Lenart isn't here. 25A has had --
2 predominantly west, has had predominantly Central
3 Arctic Caribou. Porcupine Herd has rarely been coming
4 into there. They only came in there about four years
5 ago in any significant numbers, but not very many
6 caribou have been utilized. 25A West from the middle
7 fork of the Chandalar drainage to the west has
8 predominantly been the primary wintering ground for the
9 Central Arctic Herd.

10
11 I think this proposal is, now, at this
12 point, premature. We do not know that these herds are
13 actually turning. We've had some early springs, but
14 what the big downturn in these caribou herds was when
15 we had the late spring of 2013. It annihilated the
16 yearling component, it annihilated the calf production
17 that year and it killed adult cows. It did produce
18 calves. They died because they tried to lactate on --
19 they didn't have any protein sources.

20
21 There was white snow right up until a
22 few days before they were actually calving. They've
23 got to have flowering grasses to finish that gestation.
24 Tussock flowers, that's what they eat. So if they
25 didn't have that, that killed a lot of caribou and the
26 reproductive rates were fairly limited. That was shown
27 especially in sheep.

28
29 So at this point I'm opposed to our
30 proposal, but I still feel that the Boards need to
31 understand caribou, that they only have one calf, when
32 we've had this kind of declines. We've had Western
33 Arctic Herd decline below 50 percent, to 60-70 percent.
34 Central Arctic did the same thing. Teshekpuk is way
35 down. If it was a moose population, you'd have zero
36 cow moose harvest. Oh, these are just caribou, we'll
37 just shoot them. It's like no. Caribou only have one
38 calf. They never have twins.

39
40 I want all of the regions and all of
41 the people that look at this proposal to start thinking
42 about caribou. That's what the Board did last spring.
43 They were in this room. I came here and they had a
44 yellow line on the floor over there and I caught six of
45 seven Board members and I said read my RC, record copy,
46 and I told them caribou only have one calf. I had four
47 Board members tell me I didn't know they had one calf.
48 I read your RC. I didn't know they had one calf. I
49 was surprised. I think that a political appointment
50

1 process of the Board of Game there needs to be a little
2 more biological indoctrination.

3
4 So this proposal still has viability.
5 Lisa went through a lot of work to make an analysis,
6 but there's some misperceptions. In the fall, cows need
7 protected. During the migration cows need to be
8 protected because they lead the migrations. There's
9 certain dominant cows. Cows are not real good until
10 the first of October. You can kill cows in September,
11 but they still are lactating fairly heavily and they're
12 getting ready for the breeding season.

13
14 So there's no reason at all not to kill
15 bulls all summer long, all the way -- you know, I don't
16 care where they're at, whether they're on the summer
17 range, winter range. Bulls are good from February 1 to
18 the first of October. Tenth of October if you want to
19 push it.

20
21 You're playing Russian Roulette by that
22 time.

23
24 Cows should never be harvested when
25 they're in low population status before October 1 until
26 early February. I'll disagree. I've killed bull
27 caribou in December. Real skinny. They still are real
28 thin. They've just come out of rut. They're only a
29 month out of rut at that point, a month and a half.
30 They're thin. And they're migrating when they're
31 breeding, those Arctic Herds.

32
33 So the basics are we need to protect
34 cows during migration and we need to protect cows when
35 we have low population or recovering populations.
36 We're not out of the woods yet. But I don't think
37 we're going to get support for the proposal. I do want
38 to have our conferencing with the other Regional
39 Councils to talk about these issues. I want people to
40 understand we need to conserve cows.

41
42 If we had a moose population did this,
43 there would be zero and there is zero cow moose harvest
44 in Unit 24 right now for years. We have a propensity
45 for a winter hunt down by Huslia, but we haven't had
46 enough cows to support that.

47
48 So the bottom line is I want people to
49 talk about conserving cow caribou. We want these herds
50

1 -- like I said previously, and I want the Department
2 and our Staff to understand, the larger the herd the
3 more they have -- they eat lichen, so those cows will
4 keep expanding and there's untapped lichen resources.
5 I've defied the Alaska Department of Fish and Game back
6 in 2010 to do a lichen analysis and the migration
7 analysis.

8
9 There's trails etched into the ground
10 and you can see where caribou used to use. There's
11 massive amounts of country in the south slope of the
12 Brooks Range. The southwestern interior of Alaska and
13 in the Forty Mile country north of the Yukon River
14 massive amounts of country that caribou don't even use
15 and they used to use it.

16
17 It's like they're not going to run out
18 of food. They've got lots of country to move into.
19 The bigger the herds, the more we'll feed. If we
20 maintain large caribou populations, then we'll be able
21 to feed a lot of people. They barrier themselves
22 against predation.

23
24 Deep snow, late springs and icing
25 events. They don't just die arbitrarily. That's
26 what's the trigger to start the decline of these
27 caribou herds, then predation starts eating them up,
28 overharvest of cows and overharvest of caribou can
29 exacerbate things.

30
31 Western Arctic Herd crashed to 75,000.
32 That's because there's no closed season and they could
33 use them for dog feed. I was at Kobuk Village. They
34 had stacks of caribou on the beach for dog feed.
35 Stacks and the herd is in decline. They're using them
36 for dog feed. When they closed caribou to the harvest
37 for dog feed, the herd started rapidly recovering
38 because they weren't using them as a food source for
39 dogs.

40
41 So I'm opposed to our proposal. I'm
42 going to vote against the proposal so I don't
43 exacerbate the pain, but I do want to talk about this
44 proposal extensively on our conference call and
45 hopefully the other Councils will come on board and
46 talk about these caribou herd issues.

47
48 Any discussion from the Council on the
49 proposal.

50

1 I got my big speech.

2
3 Other Council members.

4
5 Darrel.

6
7 MR. VENT: Yeah, I think you said
8 pretty much all that needs to be heard on this. Like I
9 said, it's critical that we get these numbers in. We
10 need to make sure that we put restrictions on them. We
11 have to start working toward that. We need to find a
12 way to do that in order to get -- whether it's putting
13 in a proposal or getting everybody on board in order to
14 get that numbers right.

15
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I will state for the
17 record I was happy with the Board of Game actions to
18 start to make meaningful progress on recovering these
19 caribou herds. So I'm happy the Board is moving in the
20 right direction. This Board that we currently have has
21 been working more rapidly towards caribou conservation
22 and I'm happy about that.

23
24 Pollock.

25
26 MR. SIMON: I'll tell a little story
27 here. In 1974, they pushed north to the Slope with the
28 road. They put in the gravel road all the way to the
29 North Slope and that was the last year that we get
30 caribou around Allakaket for 10 years later. What
31 happens is the road was built and they couldn't come
32 into the Koyukuk River. There's travel on the road
33 back and forth. The headlights scared them. Today
34 they're migrating more to the west and coming around
35 that way.

36
37 Later the State opened the haul road to
38 public and the people go up and down the road. Then
39 there's sport hunting allowed in some areas. Shooting
40 from the road there and more of the caribou are moving
41 to the west and making around. So I'm saying that road
42 development will disrupt caribou migration route.

43
44 Today the caribou are kind of piling up
45 on the west coast. Some of them are kind of poor.
46 They're eating too much in one area. The caribou used
47 to come across the Koyukuk River into the Ray Mountains
48 behind Allakaket. Temperate area, a lot of lichen and
49 they were protected with trees and the hills. In

50

1 February and March the bulls come out with a lot of fat
2 in the rump, but they don't come south anymore.

3
4 Another thing is that wolves and
5 grizzly bears kill a lot of these caribou. How to
6 build up the caribou. We're being cut back on the take
7 of the caribou, yet the wolves are taking what we're
8 supposed to take and the grizzlies. Last year in
9 Anchorage at the annual meeting caribou group I told
10 them that the State and the Feds could do well by
11 dispatching some wolves and grizzlies. They're the
12 ones that's killing all the caribou, not the local
13 people.

14
15 It's kind of tough years in the
16 villages now with Feds and State cutting back funds on
17 a lot of programs. More and more we need to feed
18 ourselves and live off the country, yet there's no
19 caribou out there for us to take. The caribou is not
20 there, but we're still being cut back on the take.

21
22 I guess that's my comment.

23
24 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

25
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Pollock.

27
28 Tim.

29
30 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
31 When is the Federal Subsistence Board going to be
32 deliberating these proposals?

33
34 MS. MAAS: In April. Sorry. Through
35 the Chair. The meeting is in April for the Federal
36 Subsistence Board.

37
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Have they set a
39 date?

40
41 MS. MAAS: I'm not aware of a date.

42
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Sometime in April.

44
45 MS. MAAS: Sometime in April.

46
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. That's good
48 enough.

49
50

1 MR. GERVAIS: So I was wondering if it
2 would be possible to be able to have the caribou
3 working groups go over a lot of these issues and then
4 pass a modified version of this in our winter meeting
5 or is that too late?
6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The proposal is the
8 property of the Board. We can't really change the
9 direction. That's kind of like a gyro or something.
10 It's moving in a specific direction. Carl.
11

12 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
13 was just going to add that given the complexity and the
14 number of caribou proposals, it would really throw a
15 wrench in the timeline for the Board's process to have
16 these Councils consider them again at their -- which is
17 what would have to happen.
18

19 First, these working groups would have
20 to be formed and agreed to by all the Councils. Then
21 the working groups would have to meet and discuss.
22 Then the Councils would have to meet and discuss them
23 at their winter meetings to receive their working group
24 recommendations. Many of these Councils are meeting
25 until just a couple weeks before the Board meets. So
26 it would be really impossible to process all that
27 information and go through our process and get it ready
28 for the Board meeting.
29

30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I don't think that's
31 possible. With the turn of the Board of Game's
32 actions, the caribou themselves are stabilizing from
33 health of the early springs and the certain specifics
34 to the herds themselves, so the drive to pass this
35 proposal isn't nearly as straight as it was last spring
36 in February when we were meeting to develop this
37 proposal.
38

39 Fred.
40

41 MR. ALEXIE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
42 What I'd like to ask and I know Glenn Stout does a
43 perfect job down in Galena area, like the predator, the
44 wolves, the bear, what is that on the caribou
45 percentage-wise? Anybody know?
46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: There was data in
48 here what those mortalities are.
49
50

1 MR. ALEXIE: I mean so we'd make a good
2 decision.

3
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: There's natural
5 factors, but it's not like you're going to go and like
6 shoot all the bears in the world and the whole
7 northwestern portion of Alaska. That just can't
8 happen. There's not enough money in the world to do
9 that. The local harvest of wolves and bears is
10 integral to helping sustain these populations, but
11 asking for an IM project for these entire herds that
12 can't really happen. It's too huge.

13
14 So, yeah, bears and wolves are a
15 natural factor, but we're not talking about a few
16 caribou being killed. We're talking about 12,000
17 caribou and a significant number of the Western Arctic
18 Herd is cow caribou. Like I just said, if a moose
19 population failed by two-thirds, there would be zero
20 cow moose harvest.

21
22 So the kind of really large bag limits
23 for cow caribou right now -- if we get a bad winter
24 this year and the herd starts going down, we better
25 start seriously dusting this proposal right back off
26 again because this might actually be how we have to
27 move. We're going into climate change, you get rain on
28 snow, glazes of snow. Ask Jim Dau. It wipes caribou
29 out.

30
31 You get late springs. There's things
32 that happen.

33
34 These late springs come about every 10,
35 12 years. There's an oscillation to that. 1982, 1991,
36 2001, 2013, late springs. You see caribou populations
37 decline off of those years. Those late springs are
38 really hard on those animals. They've barely gotten
39 through the winter and they have a high mortality of
40 calves and the adults.

41
42 So we're not out of the woods yet.
43 Things are looking better. We don't have to pass this
44 proposal now, but we might be seriously looking at this
45 proposal if there's five feet of snow in the Brooks
46 Range and the caribou population takes another big
47 downturn. We get another 25-30 percent downturn we
48 might be seriously thinking about cow caribou
49 conservation. Like full on cow caribou conservation
50

1 period. No cow caribou harvest.

2

3 I mean the human population is larger
4 and there's data here that we don't actually have. We
5 have 12,000 caribou harvest. What's the wound loss
6 rate? I've heard stories over there in the Kobuk
7 River, bullets bouncing across, bullets flying all over
8 the place shooting into those caribou and swimming
9 herds. There's wounded caribou. There's no
10 calculation of that mortality factor.

11

12 The Department doesn't like to talk
13 about that, but it's a human-induced mortality. You've
14 got high participation, 12,000 caribou harvested. If
15 you add 20 percent, that's a significant number of
16 caribou mortalities. So there's data lacks here. We
17 don't have all the data.

18

19 Right now I'm opposed to this proposal
20 because the herd is starting to stabilize and at this
21 point we don't need to go rushing into something, but
22 we need to start talking about what happens if it
23 starts going down. We have to have local people start
24 understanding we've got to start conserving some of
25 these cows. We want to get this herd to turn around
26 right away, you've got to conserve the cows. You can't
27 just keep shooting them at all.

28

29 We've had enough discussion on that.
30 One more comment. Anybody got a pressing issue? Jenny
31 looks like she's got one.

32

33 MS. PELKOLA: Not really. As I was
34 listening, you know, we've been discussing caribou for
35 a long time and it sounds like a desperate move to save
36 the caribou. I heard you say before that they had one
37 calf, but it didn't really sink in until now how
38 detrimental to our area or where the caribou migrate
39 that would be if people really start killing them off.
40 And it got me thinking about how to -- I think it made
41 my decision on how I'm going to vote.

42

43 Thank you.

44

45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Jenny.

46

47 Dennis.

48

49 MR. THOMAS: We've had a lot of

50

1 discussion on this. It seems like we're still going
2 around and around. Maybe we should just table this
3 until the next meeting.

4
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No. We have to vote
6 it up or down. We can't table it because the next
7 meeting is in the fall. The Federal Subsistence Board
8 is going to act on the proposal in April. So we have
9 to vote it up or down.

10
11 MR. THOMAS: No way to table it for a
12 while.

13
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, we could table
15 it, but they'll vote however they feel.

16
17 MR. THOMAS: Well, we know it's going
18 to have to come up again.....

19
20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, it might have
21 to come up again.

22
23 MR. THOMAS:and it would be a
24 more advantageous time to do it, Jack.

25
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It might come up
27 again. Not necessarily. If we start going into a
28 series of early springs and good production, the herds
29 could come back even with the kind of harvest we have.
30 But we're walking a fine line right now with the kind
31 of cow caribou we have, harvest we have. The season is
32 open for cows. I can kill a cow in 24.

33
34 I won't shoot one and I've talked to
35 everybody in the village not to shoot a cow caribou.
36 Somebody even talks about it and I jump down their
37 throat. We don't have enough cows. I don't want to
38 hear about that. I'm doing my part to conserve cows.
39 Everybody's got to get it through their head. That's
40 why we have to talk. These are not moose. These are
41 caribou. We've got to conserve these cows.

42
43 But I don't think that this proposal
44 will meet all of the criteria that the Federal
45 Subsistence Board is going to look at. You know, if
46 I'm hunting an animal and I decide I don't have a
47 chance of killing that moose, the wind's not in my
48 favor, it's on my back. The wind's not in our favor,
49 it's on our back on this proposal, so I'm going to vote

50

1 against the proposal.

2

3 But if things keep going south, that's
4 why I want this working group to talk about this cow
5 caribou issue because if things turn the opposite
6 direction, we might need to have everybody on board. I
7 perceive we don't have enough momentum for this
8 proposal.

9

10 So that's the end of the comments.

11

12 Is somebody going to call the question.

13

14 MR. VENT: Question.

15

16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The question is
17 called. Those in favor of Proposal WP18-32 signify by
18 saying aye.

19

20 MR. GERVAIS: Aye.

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those opposed to the
23 proposal signify with the same sign.

24

25 IN UNISON: Aye.

26

27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We had one support
28 and the remainder opposed. Are you on the phone,
29 Shirley? Must be a big run on those four-wheelers with
30 that dividend coming in.

31

32 (Laughter)

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I do really
35 appreciate and you did an excellent job of drawing all
36 that information together for this analysis, Lisa.

37

38 MS. MAAS: Oh, I did not actually write
39 this analysis.

40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, you didn't,
42 that's a good analysis.

43

44 MS. MAAS: But thank you.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: There's a lot of
47 information in there. Who did write this?

48

49 MS. MAAS: Tom Evans, another wildlife

50

1 biologist.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Cool. Yeah, a lot
4 of good information there. We'll go for another
5 proposal here.

6

7 MS. MAAS: All right. Next up is WP18-
8 48/49. It might take you a little while to find it.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Everybody has found
11 it.

12

13 Go ahead, Lisa.

14

15 MS. MAAS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
16 Again, for the record, my name is Lisa Maas. We are
17 discussing Wildlife Proposal 18-48/49.

18

19 WP18-48 was submitted by the Western
20 Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group or WACH Working Group
21 and WP18-49 was submitted by Louis Cusack of Chugiak.
22 Both proposals request that Federal reporting
23 requirements for caribou in Units 22, 23, and 26A be
24 aligned with the State's registration permit
25 requirements.

26

27 Both proponents recognize the
28 registration permit hunt as a useful tool to monitor
29 harvest, inform herd management and provide more
30 accurate harvest data, which is particularly important
31 given the current WACH population decline. The
32 proponent for 18-49 also states that different Federal
33 and State reporting requirements would be very
34 cumbersome and confusing to manage.

35

36 In 2016, the Alaska Board of Game
37 adopted Proposal 40 to establish a registration permit
38 hunt in Unit 22. In January 2017, the Board of Game
39 adopted Proposal 2, requiring registration permits in
40 Units 23 and 26 to better monitor harvest and improve
41 management flexibility.

42

43 The proposals effects units within the
44 ranges of the Western Arctic and Teshekpuk Caribou
45 Herds. There's substantial uncertainties in local
46 harvest estimates due to lack of harvest data and
47 overlap between herds. Current harvest estimates
48 accurately reflect trends, but not actual harvest
49 numbers. This is particularly problematic during

50

1 periods of caribou population declines when harvestable
2 surpluses may be exceeded.

3
4 If this proposal is adopted, State
5 registration permits will be required to hunt caribou
6 in Units 22, 23 and 26A. Requiring State registration
7 permits would also reduce regulatory complexity and
8 user confusion by aligning State and Federal reporting
9 requirements. However, concurrence would be needed
10 from the State to allow Federally qualified subsistence
11 users to use a State registration permit while hunting
12 under Federal regulations.

13
14 No biological impacts are expected from
15 this proposal. Rather registration permits would
16 provide better harvest data, benefitting the caribou
17 resource and subsistence uses through more informed
18 hard management and hunting regulations.

19
20 The OSM preliminary conclusion is to
21 support Proposal WP18-48 and take no action on Proposal
22 18-49.

23
24 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

25
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Lisa. Is
27 the Council clear on what the proposal is?

28
29 (No comments)

30
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do we have State of
32 Alaska comments on the proposal, are you going to do
33 this one, Lem.

34
35 MR. BUTLER: Mr. Chair. We may have
36 Phil Perry online who is the management coordinator of
37 the Bethel office for what we call Region 5.

38
39 Phil, are you online?

40
41 MR. PERRY: Yes, I am.

42
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Go right
44 ahead.

45
46 MR. PERRY: Thank you for the
47 opportunity here. My name is Phillip Perry. I'm the
48 management coordinator for Region 5, which includes
49 this portion of the state, Units 18, 22, 23 and 26A.

50

1 Our preliminary recommendation is to
2 support this proposal. Like was stated earlier, it's
3 pretty close to aligning the regulation between State
4 and Federal. We spent a lot of time and effort with
5 the registration permits, RC-800 and RC-907 to make
6 sure they're available.

7
8 We've had a lot of visits to
9 communities in the region and we're really committed to
10 making these work as a better tool for monitoring
11 harvest. That's the purpose for those registration
12 permits at this point. It kind of makes it easier for
13 all the hunters, all the users to have Federal and
14 State regulations that are as closely aligned as we can
15 have.

16
17 Thanks.

18
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. My
20 question is how do you envision with these large bag
21 limits supplying all of these? The registration permit
22 is just -- you write a number in there or you've got an
23 actual harvest ticket?

24
25 MR. PERRY: I wish I had a graphic to
26 show you. Essentially these registration permits,
27 where you guys would be familiar with a harvest ticket
28 that you would punch out a date. So on that portion
29 that you'd have to take in the field, instead of having
30 a date it actually has spaces for recording the date of
31 a harvest and then if it was a male or a female.

32
33 So it's not quite exactly like what
34 people would think of a traditional harvest ticket.
35 It's kind of a hybrid, but it's a way for people to
36 better keep track of their harvest.

37
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: They call those
39 harvest reporting when you get a harvest fish permit.
40 You just write in the date, how many you've got, et
41 cetera. Something like that? And this report would be
42 large enough to enumerate a lot of different caribou?

43
44 MR. PERRY: Yeah, that's correct. It's
45 kind of the size of a harvest ticket, but instead of
46 having all the language that's normally on a harvest
47 ticket it has spaces for people to write down their
48 harvest of caribou.

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Yeah, I would
2 like to see that at some point. Maybe you could have
3 your staff email that to our coordinator here what that
4 actually looks like.

5
6 Has our staff looked at this harvest
7 report?

8
9 MS. MAAS: I have not seen an actual
10 physical report, no.

11
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would like to see
13 that it's not onerous upon the user, that it's not a
14 cumbersome thing to use in the field. I can see
15 writing in. Each ticket would be relatively small. I
16 know super-harvesters go out many days of the year.
17 They might take caribou many, many different days.
18 Under the Western Arctic sign-up they asked you how
19 many caribou you killed in the spring and how many you
20 killed in the fall. Sort of an overall number is what
21 they used to send you, a questionnaire.

22
23 If the harvest ticket is date specific,
24 then you'd have to have a lot of those for certain
25 people if they are a super harvester. I talked to a
26 guy in Selawik and he told me he killed 125 caribou a
27 year. He killed them over many different days over
28 spring and winter, fall time.

29
30 Any other questions on this harvest
31 reporting system. It is good to have good data. I'm a
32 proponent of getting good harvest data. It documents
33 what the Boards are dealing with as far as harvest. It
34 actually is a protection for the subsistence users to
35 document what your harvests are because if they don't
36 think you killed anything, they'll allocate that to
37 somebody else. A sport user, somebody else. So it's
38 good to have good harvest reporting.

39
40 Any other questions about the State's
41 comments.

42
43 (No comments)

44
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seeing none. Thank
46 you, Phil.

47
48 Any advisory committees comment on
49 this, Zach, do you know of?

50

1 MR. STEVENSON: No, Mr. Chair.

2
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Public or written
4 comments.

5
6 (No comments)

7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Regional Council
9 recommendation. OSM's preliminary conclusion is to
10 support WP18-48 and take no action on 18-49. The Chair
11 will entertain a motion to support 18-48 and take no
12 action on 49.

13
14 MS. PELKOLA: So moved.

15
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Moved by Jenny.

17
18 MR. ALEXIE: Second.

19
20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seconded by Fred.
21 Do any Council Members have strong feelings about
22 harvest reporting under this proposal?

23
24 (No comments)

25
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any discussion.

27
28 (No comments)

29
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Call for question.

31
32 MR. VENT: Question.

33
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question is called
35 by Darrel. Those in favor of supporting Proposal WP18-
36 48 and taking no action on 49 signify by saying aye.

37
38 IN UNISON: Aye.

39
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed, same sign.

41
42 (No opposing votes)

43
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And so I think it's
45 time for a break. I've got 2:43.

46
47 We can break until 3:00 o'clock recess.

48
49 (Off record)

50

1 (On record)

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We've had a long
4 break.

5

6 Lisa is going to give us the next
7 proposal.

8

9 MS. MAAS: The next proposal is WP18-
10 57. I think everyone has found it. Again, for the
11 record, my name is Lisa Maas.

12

13 Again, some of the relevant background
14 information such as herd biology and harvest has
15 already been presented, so I'll just be presenting new
16 information.

17

18 Wildlife Proposal WP18-57 was submitted
19 by the North Slope Council and requests that Federal
20 public lands in Units 26A and 26B be closed to caribou
21 hunting by non-Federally qualified users. The
22 proponent's intent of this proposal is to ensure local
23 people get the caribou they need, protect declining
24 caribou herds and reduce user conflicts.

25

26 In March 2017, the North Slope Council
27 submitted temporary Special Action Request WSA17-04,
28 which requested temporary closure of Units 26A and 26B
29 to caribou hunting by non-Federally qualified users.
30 The Board rejected this request in June 2017.

31

32 User conflicts occur most frequently
33 near Anaktuvuk Pass in the Dalton Highway Corridor.
34 Concerns center on herd deflection, migration
35 disturbance and wanton waste by non-local hunters. One
36 alternative considered was to close Federal public
37 lands in Unit 26B; however, this is a relatively small
38 area, it would likely be ineffective at reducing user
39 conflicts and may concentrate use on State lands.

40

41 If this proposal is adopted, Federal
42 public lands would be closed to caribou hunting by non-
43 Federally qualified subsistence users in Units 26A and
44 26B. Non-local harvest from Unit 26A is very small,
45 only about 100 caribou per year. Closing Federal lands
46 in Unit 26A may concentrate non-local hunters on State
47 lands near Anaktuvuk Pass, thus increasing user
48 conflicts.

49

50

1 While non-local hunters account for
2 most of the caribou harvest in Unit 26B, much of this
3 harvest occurs on State lands. Recent changes to State
4 regulations in Unit 26B, including reducing harvest
5 limits and eliminating cow harvest, are expected to be
6 more effective in conservation of the Central Arctic
7 Herd and decreasing hunting pressure from non-local
8 hunters than a Federal lands closure.

9
10 The OSM preliminary conclusion is to
11 oppose Proposal WP18-57.

12
13 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

14
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Lisa. Any
16 questions on the proposal.

17
18 Darrel.

19
20 MR. VENT: Yeah, just a few questions
21 here. Could we get the whole picture of what's going
22 on in that area? I don't want to -- if we make a
23 decision on this, I want to make sure that we have all
24 the information. Is there a decline in the herd or is
25 there too much overharvest or any of that information?

26
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Lisa, go ahead.

28
29 MS. MAAS: Yeah, a lot of this
30 information was already presented, so that's why I
31 didn't present it again, but this came from the North
32 Slope Council and is in response to both declining
33 caribou herds, the Teshekpuk Herd, the Central Arctic
34 Herd, and the Western Arctic Herd, and also user
35 conflict. So it's concern over subsistence users
36 meeting their needs, ensuring that they're able to
37 harvest as much caribou as they need and also
38 protecting the herds and reducing user conflicts.

39
40 Again, all three caribou herds have
41 declined substantially in the last several years
42 although there are some indications that they may be
43 stabilizing. Harvest of all these herds is either at
44 the harvestable surplus or exceeding the harvestable
45 surplus, although there's a lot of uncertainty
46 surrounding those harvest estimates.

47
48 However, in 26A harvest from non-local
49 residents is so small, it's only about 100 caribou out
50

1 of the whole unit and mostly Unit 26A is BLM lands.
2 The small amount of State lands is kind of centered
3 around Anaktuvuk Pass. So if you close Federal lands
4 in Unit 26A, that might have the opposite effect of
5 concentrating use on those State lands around Anaktuvuk
6 Pass. It's one of the communities that really relies
7 on caribou and has been hurting for several years and
8 is concerned about meeting their needs.

9
10 In 26B it's a little different story
11 where most of the caribou harvest is by non-Federally
12 qualified users. However, there's still a lot of State
13 lands in that area, so the effectiveness of closing the
14 small percentage of Federal lands may not reduce
15 harvest or conflicts but shift them around and
16 concentrate them on State lands.

17
18 Again, a special action request was put
19 in by the Council for last year and that was rejected
20 by the Board for numerous reasons that I can enumerate
21 if you're interested.

22
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead and give
24 those Board reasons why they declined the special
25 action request for 26A and B.

26
27 MS. MAAS: Sure. So the Board rejected
28 17-04 because, one, the relatively small cow harvest by
29 non-Federally qualified users in 26A;

30
31 Two, the need for adequate time to
32 determine if the recently-enacted conservation actions
33 for the three caribou herds are effective in reducing
34 caribou harvest or reversing the population decline;

35
36 Three, the closure of Federal public
37 lands in Unit 26A would likely shift hunters to State
38 lands around Anaktuvuk Pass;

39
40 Four, closure of Federal public lands
41 in Unit 26B, which makes up only about 30 percent of
42 the unit, is not likely to have as much effect as
43 recent Board of Game regulations to protect the Central
44 Arctic Herd;

45
46 Five, a reduction in hunting pressure
47 along the Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area,
48 which is thought to affect the migration of the Central
49 Arctic Herd is unlikely to be effective as most non-

50

1 Federally qualified users will use the Dalton Highway
2 Corridor to access adjacent State lands.

3

4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you.

5

6 Go ahead, Darrel.

7

8 MR. VENT: Just one more quick comment
9 on that. You mentioned that there might be overharvest
10 in the area. Is that one of the things that you guys
11 are considering when you're looking at these bag limits
12 here, whether on the State land or the Federal land?

13

14 MS. MAAS: Through the Chair. This
15 proposal is just concerned about closure of Federal
16 lands, not exactly harvest limits. Again, Unit 26A,
17 the harvest is so low by non-Federal users that it's
18 pretty much biologically insignificant. Wounding loss,
19 as Jack has mentioned, is much higher than non-local
20 harvest in Unit 26A. In Unit 26B there's so much State
21 lands that it's thought -- it wouldn't really reduce
22 harvest. It would just shift use to concentrate on
23 State lands.

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Josh.

26

27 MR. REAM: This is Josh Ream for the
28 record. I just wanted to mention that during the
29 tribal consultations for Special Action 17-04 wildlife,
30 people from Point Lay also mentioned concerns about
31 concentration of non-local users on State lands if this
32 were to pass.

33

34 Thank you.

35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Does that answer
37 your questions, Darrel.

38

39 MR. VENT: I have one more, but I'll
40 wait.

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

43

44 Don.

45

46 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
47 Lisa, you mentioned some of the reasons for OSM
48 opposing this. I guess the overriding factor would be
49 the low take on Federal lands, the low take for this

50

1 hunt. Am I correct?
2

3 MS. MAAS: Through the Chair. That's
4 correct for Unit 26A. This is for Unit 26A and 26B.
5 The non-local harvest is so low it just wouldn't have
6 much affect. But in Unit 26B most of the caribou are
7 harvested by non-local users, about 89 percent, however
8 there's not much Federal land in Unit 26B. And the
9 Dalton Highway road access.
10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It's not just road.
12 A lot of the harvest occurs from air taxis that fly out
13 of Deadhorse and Happy Valley and Galbraith Lake, so
14 they can jump anywhere they want to. A lot of harvest
15 in 26B occurs east and west of the road. There's a
16 huge amount of State land in 26B. So the hunt
17 demographic is a lot different in 26B than it was last
18 year and through 2010. So 26B has a lot of harvest,
19 but my feeling is that a majority of that harvest would
20 occur on State land.
21

22 Any other questions on the proposal.
23 It's basically to close non-subsistence uses on Federal
24 lands. You should really have your reg book out and
25 look on Page 127. It shows the map and the unit
26 boundaries and the white areas are State lands. So if
27 you close the Federal lands, people just have to go a
28 little ways and they're right on State lands. You're
29 not eliminating hunters, you're just concentrating them
30 in certain areas.
31

32 This is not going to do what people
33 think it's going to do.
34

35 Any other questions on the proposal.
36

37 (No comments)
38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We'll go to the
40 State of Alaska. Lem, are you on the phone?
41

42 MR. BUTLER: I am, Mr. Chair. Thank
43 you. The State would agree with the OSM analysis and
44 what the Chair has summarized. Our preliminary
45 recommendation, although we reserve the right to change
46 it of course, is to oppose the proposal. There's a
47 lack of biological evidence this would really make a
48 large difference. It looks like the Teshekpuk Caribou
49 Herd is showing signs of being stable, possibly even
50

1 increasing. We don't think that the Central Arctic
2 Herd will continue to decline at the rate it has. We
3 saw a lot of adult mortality and some emigration of the
4 herds that we think precipitated the recent decline.
5 We have reason to suspect that's going to change.
6

7 As has been noted, this affects 26A and
8 26B. A lot of the Western Arctic Herd is moving to the
9 south at this point in time when the non-local hunters
10 show up. Much of the harvest pressure actually occurs
11 in Unit 23 to the south of 26A. It's somewhat
12 logistically hard to get to. So really the
13 implications of this proposal are probably for the
14 eastern portion of what's effected, which is perhaps
15 eastern 26A, but 26B.
16

17 As has been noted again, just
18 reiterating what's already been said, the Board of Game
19 has taken action to adjust caribou bag limits and try
20 to regulate harvest as best possible in that area.
21 We've also made a few adjustments to the regulations
22 that are in place apply to the herds that most often
23 occur in areas.
24

25 So we'd really encourage you to wait
26 and see what effect the recent regulatory changes have
27 on the conservation of these herds. Again, to some
28 extent, regulatory stability. We keep changing all
29 these things, so trying to slow down the changes and
30 see what effects the current changes have. A lot of
31 these changes haven't even been implemented yet or we
32 haven't had a chance to assess the effects of what's
33 been done.
34

35 It's really difficult when it's an
36 ever-moving landscape. The variables keep changing to
37 associate any positive or negative effect with any
38 change. I think from a managerial point of view trying
39 to provide a little stability both so people can assess
40 whether the changes have a positive or negative effect
41 as well as making it easier for resource users to
42 follow the changes would be beneficial.
43

44 Thank you, Mr. Chair.
45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Lem. Any
47 questions for Lem Butler.
48

49 (No comments)
50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seeing none.
2 Federal input on this proposal.

3
4 BLM is a major landholder in Units 26A
5 and B.

6
7 Erin.

8
9 MS. JULIANUS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
10 For the record, Erin Julianus, wildlife biologist for
11 the BLM Central Yukon Field Office, and we oppose this
12 proposal for essentially the reasons that Lisa stated.

13
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thank you.
15 Have North Slope met on this or not?

16
17 MS. MAAS: No.

18
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The Subsistence
20 Resource Commission did talk about proposals. The
21 Gates of the Arctic did not address that proposal that
22 I see in our comments. I don't recall discussing that
23 one or taking a position.

24
25 MR. VENT: Mr. Chair.

26
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Darrel.

28
29 MR. VENT: This proposal is concerning
30 an area that I think is not in the Western.....

31
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We have customary
33 and traditional use determinations of those, so that's
34 why these cross-regional jurisdictions apply to
35 different Councils.

36
37 MR. VENT: So we're making an action on
38 areas that's influencing our areas.

39
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. Or people
41 that live in our region.

42
43 MR. VENT: Just as long as it doesn't
44 conflict with the areas that's in the Northwest Arctic.

45
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. Now we've
47 gone through the agencies. Regional Council
48 recommendation. The Chair will entertain a motion to
49 adopt Proposal WP18-57 to get it on the table. Do we
50

1 have a motion to adopt.

2

3

MR. VENT: Make a motion.

4

5

6

Darrel.

7

8

MS. PELKOLA: Second.

9

10

11

12

13

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seconded by Jenny.
Discussion on the proposal. As I stated, I was very
pleased with the Board of Game's.....

14

15

MR. STEVENSON: Pardon me, Mr. Chair.

16

17

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

18

19

20

MR. STEVENSON: You could check if
there's anybody on the phone who wishes to speak.

21

22

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, excuse me.

23

24

Is anybody on the phone to speak to the
proposal or in the room.

25

26

(No comments)

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No. Okay. Thanks
for bringing me back on track there, Zach. As I said,
the Board of Game took action on Unit 26B,
significantly reduced the harvest opportunity to bulls
only and reduced the bag limit significantly from five
to two bulls for residents and one for non-resident.

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

I feel with that current bag limit that
the harvestable surplus will not be exceeded by the
non-subsistence users because this year especially the
caribou weren't available near the road and the harvest
was fairly low and the weather was really bad on the
North Slope.

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Under 815 of ANILCA, there cannot be a
significant or elimination of non-subsistence uses if
there's a harvestable surplus that is sustained by the
subsistence users and for others. Passing this
proposal would actually be in violation of ANILCA
statute because subsistence is a priority, it's not an
exclusive use. Right now the harvestable surplus in
26A and 26B is sufficient to provide for subsistence

1 and other users.

2

3 So with the Board of Game's actions to
4 stay within sustained yield, I feel that the Board's
5 actions will be sufficient to at least stabilize the
6 harvest to the point where these -- if they hadn't
7 taken any action, then I would have been supportive of
8 the proposal for 26B, but I don't want to slap down the
9 Board of Game because they did the right thing.

10

11 So I'm in opposition to Proposal WP18-
12 57 myself.

13

14 Any further comments or discussion on
15 the proposal Council Members.

16

17 (No comments)

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Calling question.

20

21 MR. VENT: Call the question.

22

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The question on the
24 proposal. Those in favor of WP18-57 signify by saying
25 aye.

26

27 (No aye votes)

28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those opposed, same
30 sign.

31

32 IN UNISON: Aye.

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Proposal fails.

35

36 Lisa.

37

38 MS. MAAS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Next
39 we're going to Proposal 46/47. It looks like people
40 have found that one. Again, for the record, my name is
41 Lisa Maas and next up is Wildlife Proposal 18-46/47.

42

43 Wildlife Proposal 18-46 was submitted
44 by the Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group or
45 WACH Working Group, and Wildlife Proposal 18-47 was
46 submitted by Enoch Mitchell of Noatak. Both proposals
47 request that Federal public lands in Unit 23 be closed
48 to caribou hunting except by Federally qualified
49 subsistence users, although WP18-47 specifically

50

1 requests that the closure extend from 2018 to 2020/21
2 only.

3
4 Both proponents are concerned about the
5 decline of the Western Arctic Herd and noted that the
6 2016/17 closure to non-Federally qualified users
7 helped local hunters meet their subsistence needs by
8 reducing user conflicts and hunting activity from non-
9 local hunters. Both proponents also emphasized the
10 vital cultural and nutritional role of caribou to Unit
11 23 residents.

12
13 The proponent for WP18-47 also stated
14 that aircraft noise from transporters and guides can
15 disrupt caribou migration, which is a source of user
16 conflict. Co-sponsors for WP18-47 include the Native
17 Village of Noatak, the Cape Krusenstern National
18 Monument Subsistence Resource Commission, the Kobuk
19 Valley National Park Subsistence Resource Commission,
20 and the Noatak/Kivalina Fish and Game Advisory
21 Committee.

22
23 In 2016, the Board adopted Wildlife
24 Special Action 16-01 closing all Federal public lands
25 in Unit 23 to caribou hunting by non-Federally
26 qualified users for the 2016-17 regulatory year. In
27 June 2016, the State submitted temporary Special Action
28 Request WSA-16-03 to reopen Federal public lands in
29 Unit 23. The Board rejected this request.

30
31 In June 2017, the Board adopted
32 Wildlife Special Action 17-03, closing a portion of
33 Federal public lands in Unit 23 to caribou hunting by
34 non-Federally qualified users for the 2017-18
35 regulatory year. This targeted closure included
36 Federal public lands along the Noatak River and within
37 the Squirrel, Eli and Aggie River drainages.

38
39 On average, local hunters within the
40 range of the WACH account for 95 percent of the total
41 Western Arctic Herd harvest while non-local hunters
42 account for 5 percent. Most Western Arctic Caribou are
43 harvested in Unit 23.

44
45 In 2016, during the Federal lands
46 closure, the number of non-Federally qualified hunters
47 in Unit 23 decreased substantially. Most local hunters
48 access caribou hunting areas by boat, while most non-
49 local hunters access hunting areas by plane.

50

1 User conflicts between local and non-
2 local hunters have been well documented in Unit 23
3 since at least the 1980s, particularly in Noatak
4 National Preserve and the Squirrel River drainage.
5 Local hunters have expressed concerns over aircraft and
6 non-local hunters disrupting caribou migration by
7 scaring caribou away from river crossings, landing and
8 camping along migration routes and shooting lead
9 caribou.

10
11 Other sources indicate that while
12 aircraft can affect caribou behavior in the short term,
13 they likely do not impact long-term caribou behavior or
14 migration through Noatak National Preserve. Short-term
15 disturbance could still affect hunter success.

16
17 The Unit 23 interagency group was
18 established in January 2017 when the Board directed the
19 Office of Subsistence Management to organize a group of
20 State and Federal representatives in order to discuss
21 possible solutions to Unit 23 user conflicts such as
22 targeted closures. This group met in April of 2017 and
23 agreed upon a possible targeted closure.

24
25 User conflicts occur more frequently in
26 some areas of Unit 23 than in others. Specifically
27 portions of Noatak National Preserve and the Squirrel
28 River Drainage have repeatedly been identified at
29 Regional Advisory Council and public meetings as areas
30 where conflicts are concentrated. Conversely, other
31 Federal public lands in Unit 23, such as Bering Land
32 Bridge National Preserve, Selawik National Wildlife
33 Refuge and Gates of the Arctic National Preserve have
34 not been identified as areas experiencing much user
35 conflict.

36
37 Due to this discrepancy in user
38 conflict, a partial Federal public lands closure as
39 depicted in Map 10 on Page 49 may be more appropriate
40 and more effective than a unit-wide Federal lands
41 closure. Indeed, a unit-wide closure may represent an
42 unnecessary restriction on non-subsistence uses. The
43 targeted closure depicted in Map 10 on Page 49 is also
44 the area suggested by the Unit 23 interagency group.

45
46 If this proposal is adopted, caribou
47 hunting on Federal public lands in Unit 23 would be
48 closed to non-Federally qualified users. Regulatory
49 year 2018/19 would be the third consecutive year of a
50

1 closure. No biological impact is expected from
2 adopting this proposal as non-Federally qualified users
3 account for such a small percentage of Western Arctic
4 Herd harvest.

5
6 While the number of non-Federally
7 qualified users and aircraft in Unit 23 would likely
8 decrease substantially, use may become concentrated on
9 State lands, particularly on gravel bars below the mean
10 high water mark. Other users, such as moose hunters,
11 private planes and recreational boaters would still be
12 able to fly over and access Federal public lands.

13
14 Subsistence opportunity for Federally
15 qualified subsistence users may increase. Local
16 residents recognize positive effects from the 2016-17
17 closure, citing higher harvest success. The WACH
18 Working Group developed guidelines for herd management,
19 which can be found on Table 1 on Page 22 of the
20 analysis.

21
22 Currently the Western Arctic Herd
23 population is on the line between preservative and
24 conservative management. One recommendation under
25 preservative management is closure of some Federal
26 public lands to non-qualified users. These guidelines
27 were developed and agreed upon by many stakeholders,
28 including the Federal Subsistence Board.

29
30 Two criteria for restricting non-
31 subsistence use under Title VIII of ANILCA are
32 conservation of healthy wildlife populations and
33 continuation of subsistence uses. Closure for
34 conservation reasons is not warranted. However,
35 closure of some Federal public lands for the
36 continuation of subsistence uses is warranted due to
37 continued user conflicts in the Noatak and Squirrel
38 River Drainages as well as the benefit of the 2016-17
39 closure.

40
41 As I'm reading the OSM preliminary
42 conclusion, it may help to refer to Map 10 on Page 49.
43 The OSM preliminary conclusion is to support Proposal
44 WP18-46 with modification to close all Federal public
45 lands within a 10 mile wide corridor (5 miles either
46 side) along the Noatak River from the western boundary
47 of Noatak National Preserve upstream to the confluence
48 with the Cutler River; north of the Noatak River
49 between, and including, the Kelly and Nimiuktuk River
50

1 drainages; within the northern and southern boundaries
2 of the Eli and Aggie River drainages, respectively; and
3 within the Squirrel River drainage to caribou hunting
4 except by Federally qualified subsistence users and to
5 take no action on Proposal WP18-47.

6

7 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Lisa.
10 OSM's preliminary conclusion with the delineated
11 closure area.

12

13 Is that clear to the Council.

14

15 Go ahead, Darrel.

16

17 MR. VENT: Just some clarification
18 here. I'm looking at Page 45 and you're talking about
19 not closing the aircraft on Federally qualified areas.
20 So if we have subsistence users, which means that
21 everybody is a subsistence user. But if you're using
22 aircraft, you have transporters coming in. Is that
23 something that you'd be worried about? Because the
24 villagers would have to walk quite a ways in just to
25 get to where the hunting areas are along the river
26 compared to using an aircraft where it would be more
27 easily accessible. I'm just kind of confused on that.

28

29 MS. MAAS: Through the Chair. So this
30 is -- Figure 12 on Page 45 is depicting all aircraft
31 use in Noatak National Preserve and the OSM preliminary
32 conclusion is recommending closing portions of Noatak
33 National Preserve for the continuation of subsistence
34 use because that is an area that's continually cited as
35 user conflicts and one of the main reasons are all
36 those aircraft and all the transporters flying over and
37 landing, camping along migration routes scaring
38 caribou, things like that.

39

40 Does that answer your question?

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do you see the map
43 on 49 here. All that crosshatch would be open to
44 subsistence, but it would not be open to non-
45 subsistence users for caribou. She made it clear that
46 it could be open for bear hunters or moose hunters or
47 other kinds of hunters. Only caribou would be closed
48 under this proposal.

49

50

1 MR. VENT: So she explained to me that
2 there would be no aircraft flying into these areas.

3
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: They could fly in
5 with aircraft to hunt bears, moose.....

6
7 MR. VENT: But not caribou.

8
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: But not caribou.

10
11 MR. VENT: That's what I need to know.

12
13 MS. MAAS: And the majority of hunters
14 in that area are caribou hunters.

15
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: But theoretically a
17 subsistence user in Kotzebue could fly to that area and
18 hunt.

19
20 MS. MAAS: That's correct.

21
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other questions.

23
24 (No comments)

25
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Lisa.

27
28 Alaska Department of Fish and Game,
29 Lem.

30
31 MR. BUTLER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
32 believe we have Phil Perry on the line. Phil, would
33 you like to address this one or would you like me too?

34
35 MR. PERRY: This is Phillip. Yeah, I
36 can take it, Lem. So our preliminary recommendation
37 here is to oppose this proposal. I think some of our
38 thoughts are along the same lines as the OSM analysis.
39 This is probably not going to change the harvest much
40 or the biology. Again, there were several changes the
41 Board of Game did last January for Unit 23. One is
42 putting in the registration permit so we can get a
43 better certainly of harvest.

44
45 The other thing was there was an
46 extension of the Noatak Controlled Use Area that the
47 Board did with a lot of input from the communities
48 there to see if -- the Board of Game looked at it very
49 carefully trying to balance the -- you know, help the
50

1 communities with any user conflict, but not close such
2 a broad area that it completely removes any non-
3 resident or non-local hunting.

4
5 So with those changes I think we'd
6 prefer to not have this pass and have a year or two of
7 these regulations to evaluate how they've affected
8 hunting and different hunters there.

9
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Any questions
11 for the State.

12
13 (No comments)

14
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seeing none.
16 Thanks, Phil. Federal comments. Do we have anybody
17 from Park Service for Noatak Preserve.

18
19 (No comments)

20
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don't see anybody.

22
23 BLM comments.

24
25 Bruce.

26
27 MR. SEPPI: Mr. Chair. For the record,
28 Bruce Seppi with Anchorage Field Office BLM. We would
29 oppose the original proposal as written, but would
30 support OSM's modified version of 46 where there was
31 targeted closures of Federal lands.

32
33 I should point out that the Squirrel
34 River is mostly BLM up away from the river, but there
35 are selected lands which are State lands right in that
36 river corridor. If that's closed, which we would
37 support, hunters could still land in that gravel bar
38 area and hunt in that gravel bar area and take caribou
39 in that corridor. So it isn't as though it's just
40 completely shutting it down.

41
42 In the guides and outfitters and
43 transporters, the few that we permit there, closing
44 these areas pretty much shut down the Squirrel River
45 for caribou hunting, but there are still moose and bear
46 hunters that are in there that are generally
47 transported in there and left with guides and then
48 transported out.

49
50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any questions for
2 BLM.
3
4 (No comments)
5
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks.
7
8 MR. SEPPI: Thanks.
9
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Northwest Arctic,
11 when do they meet again, the end of this month?
12
13 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair. The
14 Northwest Arctic Council meets on October 25 and 26 in
15 Kotzebue.
16
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do they have an
18 advisory committee that met on this proposal?
19
20 MR. STEVENSON: They do have an
21 advisory committee. I'm not aware of them having met
22 on this issue, Mr. Chair.
23
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Any written
25 comments on this proposal.
26
27 MR. STEVENSON: No, Mr. Chair.
28
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any public testimony
30 on the phone or in the room.
31
32 (No comments)
33
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don't hear any. So
35 Regional Council recommendation. The Chair will
36 entertain a motion to adopt Proposal.....
37
38 MS. MAAS: Mr. Chair.
39
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, go ahead,
41 Lisa.
42
43 MS. MAAS: I just wanted to remind you
44 that WP18-47 had several co-sponsors including the
45 Noatak/Kivalina Fish and Game AC and the Cape
46 Krusenstern and Kobuk Valley Subsistence Resource
47 Commissions.
48
49 MR. STEVENSON: Mr. Chair.
50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

2
3 MR. STEVENSON: To add onto Lisa's
4 point, the comments that were submitted -- I should
5 clarify, that were submitted by those three National
6 Park Service Subsistence Resource Commissions more or
7 less articulated the same points. That they viewed
8 caribou as a vitally important resource of interest to
9 Federally qualified subsistence users and their
10 perception was that this would help to minimize those
11 user conflicts.

12
13 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

14
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. So the
16 Chair will entertain a motion to support OSM's
17 preliminary conclusion that supports Proposal WP18-46
18 with modification and take no action on 18-47 and then
19 delineates this area in the Noatak Preserve, which some
20 of that delineation is in the Board of Game's
21 Controlled Use Area also. So some of that is addressed
22 by the Board, but not the user types.

23
24 So the Chair is entertaining a motion
25 to adopt OSM's preliminary conclusion with the defined
26 closure area in Unit 23. You can see that on Page 3
27 and 4 of this proposal.

28
29 MR. GERVAIS: So moved.

30
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So moved.

32
33 MR. SIMON: Second.

34
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Moved and seconded
36 by Pollock. Discussion on the proposal.

37
38 Go ahead there, Darrel.

39
40 MR. VENT: As I mentioned before, this
41 is our areas that are in the Northwest, so we're making
42 recommendations on there without their input. I'm just
43 pointing that out.

44
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, they haven't
46 met yet and we have to meet now and make decisions.
47 Basically it's their proposal. OSM has kind of trimmed
48 it back a little with, which BLM will now support the
49 modified proposal whereas they wouldn't have before.

50

1 Carl, do you have something to say.

2
3 MR. JOHNSON: Sure, Mr. Chair. I just
4 wanted to express to Darrel think of this not as
5 discussing a proposal that's in somebody else's region,
6 but you speaking on behalf of subsistence users in your
7 own region that use that resource and hopefully that
8 will make you feel more comfortable about making a
9 recommendation to the Board.

10
11 MR. VENT: Yeah. I just didn't want to
12 look at it as we're making a conflict with them. We
13 like to work with them because they have a good board
14 over there just as we do.

15
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Don.

17
18 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
19 kind of was confused about this because I don't know if
20 we consider this a cross-over proposal or not. I mean
21 because none of our region affects this. I don't mind
22 supporting another region's proposal, but I don't know
23 why this is in ours when it's not a cross one.

24
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The reason being is
26 that Unit 23 -- a customary and traditional use
27 determination is residents of Unit 21D West of the
28 Koyukuk River and Yukon River Drainages, Galena,
29 including Wiseman and other residents of the Dalton
30 Highway Corridor in Unit 26A. There's a whole bunch of
31 residents in Unit 24 that have customary and
32 traditional use, including Darrel, who is talking about
33 going over there to Selawik to shoot caribou.

34
35 So this proposal directly affects this
36 region because we have customary and traditional use.
37 If caribou are protected there and they migrate past
38 more effectively through the harvest area of Unit 23,
39 they may actually get over there into the Huslia Flats
40 by Darrel or hopefully they'll come over by me.

41
42 MR. HONEA: Okay. Thank you for that
43 clarification.

44
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're on the
46 discussion of the proposal.

47
48 You've got one more comment there,
49 Carl.

50

1 MR. JOHNSON: Mr. Chair, thank you.
2 Just a follow-up again on the last thing that Darrel
3 had indicated about how the Northwest Arctic Council
4 might feel about this Council's action. Based on some
5 of our off-season discussions with members of that
6 Council, it seems like there might be support on that
7 Council also for OSM's preliminary conclusion. We'll
8 have to wait and see what the ultimate discussion is,
9 but some of our discussions with some of those Council
10 members seem to be going in that direction.

11
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Glad to hear
13 that. And they were part of the Board of Game's
14 discussion on the Controlled Use Area expansion. So,
15 yeah, I don't feel out of line by going with OSM's
16 preliminary conclusion of delineation of the closure.

17
18 Other Council Member comments.

19
20 (No comments)

21
22 MR. ALEXIE: Call for question.

23
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The question on the
25 main motion is to adopt the OSM preliminary conclusion
26 to support Proposal WP18-46 with modification to
27 delineate the closure area. Those in favor of that
28 proposal signify by saying aye.

29
30 IN UNISON: Aye.

31
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed, same sign.

33
34 (No opposing votes)

35
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Modified proposal
37 18-46 is adopted.

38
39 Lisa.

40
41 MS. MAAS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The
42 last caribou proposal is 18-45, the next proposal.

43
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Zach was wanting
45 clarification. No action on Proposal WP18-47 and that
46 was understood under the modification so I want the
47 record to reflect that.

48
49 Go ahead, Lisa.

50

1 MS. MAAS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
2 Again, for the record, my name is Lisa Maas.

3
4 The last of the caribou proposals is
5 WP18-45. Wildlife Proposal 18-45 was submitted by the
6 Northwest Arctic Council and requests that the caribou
7 harvest limit in Unit 23 be reduced from 5 caribou per
8 day to 3 caribou per day.

9
10 The proponent states that the proposed
11 change is needed to conserve the Western Arctic Caribou
12 Herd as its population is currently declining and is a
13 vital subsistence resource. The proponent also notes
14 that the proposed change will still meet the needs of
15 Federally qualified subsistence users.

16
17 In 2016 the Federal caribou harvest
18 limit in Unit 23 was reduced from 15 caribou per day to
19 five caribou per day. One alternative considered was
20 to defer this proposal. However, unless the Board of
21 Game reduces the State harvest limit, this proposal
22 would have no conservation effect and would result in
23 Federal regulations being more restrictive than State
24 regulations.

25
26 If this proposal is adopted, the
27 caribou harvest limit in Unit 23 would be reduced,
28 which reduces opportunity for Federally qualified
29 subsistence users. Federal regulations would also be
30 more restrictive than State regulations, eliminating a
31 subsistence priority. State and Federal regulations
32 would be further misaligned, increasing regulatory
33 complexity and user confusion.

34
35 In 2016, the harvest limit was reduced
36 from 15 caribou per day to five caribou per day. Time
37 is needed to evaluate the effectiveness of recent
38 regulatory restrictions before enacting further
39 restrictions. There would also be no conservation
40 effects from adopting this proposal as all Alaska
41 residents would still be able to harvest five caribou
42 per day in Unit 23 under State regulations except in
43 areas that are closed to these users.

44
45 The OSM preliminary conclusion is to
46 oppose WP18-45.

47
48 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

49
50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Lisa. Any
2 questions on the proposal.

3
4 Dennis.

5
6 MR. THOMAS: Supposedly we're worried
7 about the condition of the herd and how many, now we're
8 trying to cut it and we're opposed to it?

9
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Northwest Arctic is
11 concerned about the bag limit being that high and that
12 is a fairly high bag limit, but.....

13
14 MR. THOMAS: Five is very high or 15,
15 what?

16
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, five caribou
18 bag limit per day, every day.

19
20 MR. THOMAS: Yeah, I know.

21
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Especially if
23 they're killing cows. But the effect of the proposal
24 -- there's still five caribou bag limit on the State
25 lands and other areas that are not closed to non-
26 subsistence users. So basically the proposal is too
27 weak. They'd have to get the Board of Game to reduce
28 the bag limit to three to be effective. So they should
29 make an out-of-cycle proposal to the Board of Game to
30 do that. So that would be the first step.

31
32 MR. THOMAS: So you're saying that both
33 entities should cut it down to this or forget it.

34
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, the Board of
36 Game would -- their regulation right now allows five
37 caribou per day. This is just another one of these
38 kind of proposals that the Council should talk this
39 over and then submit an agenda change request to the
40 Board of Game to change the bag limit to three. A
41 redundant proposal to the Federal Subsistence Board
42 would be an effective management reduction.

43
44 Darrel.

45
46 MR. VENT: Well, it sounds like this
47 proposal is between OSM and Northwest. I think that
48 maybe we shouldn't take any action on this. This is
49 not our proposal. This is not in our area. It's

50

1 concerning them.

2

3

I'd let them make a decision on it.

4

5

6

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Your recommendation is deferral? Well, let's continue through the process here.

7

8

9

Let's go to the State, Lem or Phil.

10

11

12

MR. PERRY: Mr. Chairman, this is Phillip. I'm still here.

13

14

15

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You have comments on Proposal WP18-45.

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

MR. PERRY: Yeah. So I think our thinking is very similar. We don't want to have a different Federal regulation than State, especially one that would probably not change many things. We'd like to also point out the reason there's a five caribou per day bag limit, we don't think at this point that harvest is what's driving this population one way or the other.

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

Again, we have a brand-new registration permit that's in place to help us with getting better harvest reporting. A change from five to three we don't really think that would be a change as far as the number of caribou harvested. Five gives people, especially local hunters that depend on caribou, the flexibility to harvest caribou when they're abundant. Three per day would potentially make people travel back and forth more or not be as efficient in their harvesting of caribou.

36

37

38

39

40

We at least preliminary oppose this kind of on those grounds that it's not really going to make a lot of difference in harvest, but it may affect how people harvest caribou.

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Your comment that you don't think that harvest is a driving factor. A 12,000 caribou harvest, what is your calculated incidental harvest mortality? What's your wound loss factor? Is that actually even calculated into this mortality factor?

48

49

50

MR. PERRY: Yeah, I'm not aware of

1 anywhere we calculate that. I'd have to defer to maybe
2 Lem or somebody would know off the top of their head if
3 there's other areas we use a wounding loss factor in,
4 but we don't in this area.

5
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You've heard these
7 stories about these caribou swimming across the river
8 and all the shooting and bullets bouncing off the water
9 and hitting other boats and stuff. You didn't think
10 that there's a wound loss rate at all? There's got to
11 be some kind of a factor. That's not real science if
12 you don't actually have kind of an idea what -- when
13 you've got 12,000 harvest, there could easily be a 20
14 percent mortality factor with bullets bouncing around
15 like that in herds.

16
17 MR. BUTLER: Mr. Chair, this is Lem.

18
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

20
21 MR. BUTLER: As Phil indicated,
22 wounding loss is a really difficult thing to quantify.
23 There have been studies that have been done on elk and
24 other species. It usually takes a very close
25 inspection with telemetry and other things to try to
26 quantify it. There are carcass assessments and things
27 like that. Generally those studies are fairly expensive
28 and imprecise and still don't completely quantify
29 exactly what the wounding loss is.

30
31 Generally what we do is we apply to
32 most of our herds a loss factor and that might
33 incorporate both legal harvest or unreported harvest as
34 well as wounding loss in our herds. You're right in
35 asserting that it's a relative quantification when we
36 apply those things, but we do try to account for it.

37
38 The other thing that I'd point out is
39 that there are a lot of factors that affect caribou
40 survival through the course of the year that we are not
41 able to quantify. Loss to predation, whether it be
42 bears or wolves or starvation, drowning, other natural
43 events. We've seen landslides and avalanches that have
44 taken out up to 100, 200, 300 caribou at a time. There
45 are a lot of things that are very difficult to
46 quantify.

47
48 What we attempt to do is we attempt to
49 quantify the human contribution to mortality on an
50

1 annual basis and assess whether humans are driving a
2 population or not. A lot of those things that we can't
3 quantify, like wounding loss, I suggest get caught in
4 other things indirectly. We can't subscribe it 100
5 percent, but it will show up in our adult mortality
6 associated with radio collars.

7
8 Again, we might not be able to
9 distinguish between human wounding loss and predation
10 and other natural events, but it's not that we don't do
11 the best we can with the information provided.

12
13 Generally what you're going to see from
14 the Department is that as the population changes and
15 responds to changes in regulations, we'll make those
16 adjustments. So if a season is liberalized and the
17 population takes an erratic turn, whether it's a
18 decrease or if it seems to handle it, we're going to
19 assume that that component of wounding loss, which
20 probably varies annually, is either sustainable or not
21 and make the adjustments accordingly.

22
23 I understand that that's a concern. It
24 definitely is for a species that tends to aggregate
25 particularly in the winter. You may have pass-through
26 shots, you may have other situations where they go up
27 the hill and you can't capture the animal or reduce it
28 to a useable kind of thing. But we are doing the best
29 we can with that. I do think that although it's not
30 directly measured we're picking up on it and trying to
31 respond to it accordingly.

32
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: My point is that
34 when we're approaching maximum harvest, that these
35 nuances can be a driving factor in whether this herd is
36 going to recover very quickly.

37
38 MR. BUTLER: And I'd agree with you on
39 that.

40
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Like I was at a
42 Board of Game meeting and they were talking about the
43 bison harvest at Delta and how they needed to spread
44 the harvest out because there was an exponent of the
45 more competition the more riskier shots hunters take
46 and the more riskier shots taken were more higher
47 incidental harvest mortalities, so the Board was
48 addressing that through a deliberation process.

49
50

1 As these caribou herds get lower in
2 number and people get more competitive, I think that
3 there should be -- all managers should be thinking more
4 closely about what is that correction factor. Is it
5 3,000 animals, 1,000 animals. If the herd drops below
6 we go into preservative, that should be a driving
7 question in further deliberations, but we're not there
8 yet.

9
10 MR. THOMAS: Mr. Chair.

11
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Dennis.
13 Question to the State.

14
15 MR. THOMAS: Okay. Well, the questions
16 that we've got here, all these driving factors that we
17 put in, this is kind of an act of God, a lot of this.
18 You say your wound factor. This happens. This is part
19 of the thing. Getting hit by a landslide, this is an
20 act of God again. These are the kinds of things that
21 we can't really control. All we could do is have some
22 numbers coming in behind it.

23
24 But from here, if we go from five
25 caribou a day to three, that's 40 percent that we've
26 saved right there. They're still living for that herd
27 to grow. So what the heck is wrong with that? The
28 other factors are going to be in there, but this kind
29 of thing we can do something about now. You want to
30 build that herd up, okay, cut down your take on it. To
31 me this is a good way to start. You're saving 40
32 percent right there and that's my comment.

33
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don.

35
36 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair, I also have to
37 agree with this. This is the one like the one from the
38 GASH area where they knocked out where they want to
39 take off 10 days. What am I missing here? If the
40 Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory Council
41 wanted to reduce their take, then what am I missing
42 here? Why is OSM opposed to this? I mean what is the
43 rationing here? What is the justification for doing
44 that? Isn't that kind of like -- not a cost-saving
45 thing, but something like you're saving your wildlife?
46 What am I missing?

47
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Lisa, do you have a
49 comment.

50

1 MS. MAAS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So if
2 WP18-46 is passed, which is the closure, OSM
3 recommended a targeted closure to continue subsistence
4 use because people from Noatak are having trouble
5 meeting their needs and we have listened to many people
6 at public hearings talk about how expensive and time-
7 consuming it is to harvest caribou that they cannot
8 afford to come home empty-boated.

9
10 So if we enact this closure to help
11 them harvest caribou, but then we reduce the harvest
12 limit and the only place in Unit 23 where that
13 reduction in harvest limit actually has an effect is in
14 that closed area, that just doesn't make sense to me
15 that we're saying we're going to close this area to
16 help Noatak residents harvest caribou but we're going
17 to reduce the harvest limit so it's going to take you
18 longer and you might have to travel further and spend
19 more money to find caribou because you can only harvest
20 three per day instead of five per day, but all the non-
21 local hunters on State lands can still harvest five per
22 day.

23
24 So I don't know if that helps answer
25 your questions or that makes sense, but then Federal
26 users would be more restricted than the non-local
27 users.

28
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: But another aspect
30 is a lot of caribou are harvested in the Kobuk when
31 they're swimming. Well, that's State waters. When
32 they're swimming in the river, they shoot them in the
33 water, they can shoot five a day. That's a five
34 caribou limit. There could be Federal lands on both
35 sides. That still doesn't stop them from shooting five
36 caribou.

37
38 So this proposal has flaws in it that
39 it needs to have State regulation. That's one of the
40 issues with this proposal. It has the flaw that
41 there's a five caribou bag limit under State
42 regulations and a lot of caribou are killed in the
43 river.

44
45 Go ahead.

46
47 MR. THOMAS: What would be the matter
48 with the State going down to this then too so we're
49 equal across the board? Is this so hard to do or to

50

1 recommend or whatnot?

2
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: If the Councils get
4 together and have a call, we could talk about all four
5 Councils submitting an agenda change request to the
6 Board of Game to reduce the bag limit to three. Then,
7 if the Board adopts that, then we could easily get the
8 Federal Board then we'd have a uniform regulation. But
9 this proposal is not -- what Lisa's saying is it's not
10 going to work right now because the way the -- the
11 Northwest Arctic feels that the caribou herd can't
12 support five caribou a day bag limit. They think
13 there's some problem.

14
15 Zach is their council coordinator.
16 What was the underlying discussion there, Zach?

17
18 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair.
19 Responding to the points that were made both by Member
20 Honea and Member Thomas. At the previous meeting there
21 was a concern that the amount of harvest that was
22 occurring and the majority of the take is coming from
23 local residents themselves. If the Northwest Arctic
24 Herd continued to decline, that those Federally
25 qualified users would shoulder some of that
26 responsibility and also some of those effects.

27
28 One of the Council Member Hannah Loon
29 introduced a motion to reduce some of that take and
30 that was ultimately supported by the Council. So that
31 was the rationale why that came forward. It was, from
32 my perspective, an expression of the Council's attempt
33 to try to enact some conservation of that subsistence
34 resource that the Council viewed as being important to
35 their members.

36
37 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

38
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's exactly what
40 I wanted to hear what their line of rationale was.

41
42 Go ahead, Darrel.

43
44 MR. VENT: That was the reason that I
45 suggested that we take no action on this because they
46 made a decision. It's up to them. OSM made their
47 decision. So why should we be taking action on
48 something that's conflicting between them and OSM and
49 the State?

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I think this is a
2 worthy discussion issue, but I don't think this
3 proposal is viable because it has flaws in it. We
4 could table the discussion or defer the proposal to the
5 region to Northwest Arctic and let them fight with the
6 Federal Subsistence Board on what their wishes are, but
7 I would like them to also be able to have a discussion
8 with them why this proposal wasn't viable. That's why
9 I'm wanting this work group so all of our Councils can
10 talk about what will work and what won't work. Yeah, I
11 understand what they want and I would be supportive of
12 that.

13
14 I would entertain deferring the
15 proposal myself. I do want to talk about this. I do
16 think that the idea is viable, but it needs to be
17 approached to the Board of Game.

18
19 MR. THOMAS: I would think that we
20 would want to support what they want to do. If this is
21 what they want, I'd say go to the Council that's
22 involved with this and we should want to support what
23 they want. Unless it would really be detrimental to
24 anything we got, then we'd say, hey, guys. But,
25 overall, I think we would want to support each other.

26
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It's a non-viable
28 regulation because they can kill five caribou a day on
29 the river. So it's a non-viable regulation.

30
31 MR. THOMAS: You say it's non-viable,
32 Jack. Maybe it is viable. Maybe there's some way it
33 could work, see.

34
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Carl.

36
37 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
38 I'll interject one of the things that we hope to try to
39 remind our Councils of is that is when the Federal
40 Subsistence Board hears your recommendation, there are
41 three parts of Section 805(c) of ANILCA they'll be
42 looking at to determine whether or not they're going to
43 accept your recommendation.

44
45 One, is it based on substantial
46 evidence in the record. Two, is it consistent with
47 sound wildlife management practices. And, three, would
48 it be detrimental to subsistence uses.

49
50

1 That third point has already come up in
2 the discussion and that is if you give State sport
3 hunters a better hunting opportunity than Federally
4 qualified subsistence users, which this proposal would
5 do until a Board of Game action changes it to a three
6 caribou daily limit. Then you have to ask yourselves
7 whether or not you're meeting those criteria in Section
8 805(c) that the Board would consider when considering
9 your recommendation.

10

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CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Zach.

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CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Zach.

MR. STEVENSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would add, responding to Member Thomas's point and elaborating further on Carl Johnson's point just a moment ago. The potential to follow up and have a conversation or information sharing with the Northwest Arctic Council could help to address some of that conflict by making clear the potential for entertaining a proposal before the Board of Game.

Thank you.

MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Don.

MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Now that being said, that makes more sense in justifying why OSM is opposed to it. We sat here and went round and round until you mentioned that. That makes a little more sense. So whether we be neutral or support it, it's coming from the people. That is my train of thought here. It's coming from the people. This is what they want, you know. Whether it's going to hurt them or not, we don't know until he mentioned that. So thank you for the clarification for that part.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'm supportive of their line of reasoning, but I don't think that the method that they're using is going to be beneficial to them because somebody can fly over to the Kobuk, land the floatplane in the river, beach it on the sandbar, get out their Zodiac, drive around in the river and shoot five caribou, haul them back to their floatplane and fly away with them. Sport hunters are going to have this advantage of five caribou a day bag limit and the local people could do that. But if the caribou are on the land, they're limited to three caribou. If it's

1 wintertime, then they're limited to three caribou.

2

3 We have to work with these other
4 Councils to work on a proposal to the agenda change
5 request to the Board of Game if they want to do that
6 really strongly, then we should help them do that
7 through a call and then all the Councils submit that
8 recommendation. The Board of Game might entertain
9 that. It's up to them though.

10

11 MR. HONEA: Just one last comment. So
12 that brings up an interesting scenario here. In their
13 defense, for their livelihood of whatever, we oppose
14 their own proposal?

15

16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, if we pass the
17 proposal, then I'm going to have to go to the Federal
18 Subsistence Board and support a proposal that's going
19 to fail in the mind of the Federal Subsistence Board
20 because they're going to look at it logically and go
21 this doesn't help the people. The sport hunters can
22 still kill five caribou a day in the river and so can
23 the local residents, but it's a moot proposal for the
24 majority of the time.

25

26 So I think there's a better way to do
27 this. I think the Western Caribou Work Group, the
28 Regional Councils could work towards an agenda change
29 request with the Board of Game to address reducing the
30 bag limit to three caribou per day. That's the way to
31 do that.

32

33 MR. THOMAS: There is an avenue for
34 them to do this.

35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, there's an
37 avenue. There's a way to do that, but this isn't the
38 way to do it.

39

40 I don't really support the proposal
41 because it's not going to work out. I don't want
42 people to get their hopes up and then it like slaps
43 them in the face. That's what's going to happen
44 because there's still going to be people shooting
45 caribou in the river, five of them every day. Overall
46 harvest is not going to be significantly reduced with
47 this proposal. If that's what they want to do, then
48 they have to do it a different way.

49

50

1 Go ahead, Darrel.

2
3 MR. VENT: Yeah, I like your idea of
4 deferring the proposal or tabling it. It's up to them
5 to make a decision. I think we discussed quite a bit
6 on this already. That was a good suggestion that you
7 made.

8
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we have a motion
10 on the floor to adopt. We can fail that motion -- how
11 would we do that, to retract that motion? Carl. If we
12 want to defer this proposal, what would be the
13 procedure?

14
15 MR. JOHNSON: There's two ways to go.
16 First, the original proponent with concurrence of the
17 second could withdraw the motion. The other option
18 would be the amend the existing motion to just
19 completely change it to defer to the home region.
20 Tabling it is not really an option because tabling
21 requires future action at a meeting, which you don't
22 have the opportunity to do.

23
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So the Chair will
25 entertain a motion to amend the main motion to defer
26 this proposal back to region. Tim.

27
28 MR. GERVAIS: Jack, why don't you just
29 allow me to withdraw my motion.

30
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. We'll go that
32 way.

33
34 MR. GERVAIS: So I'll withdraw this
35 motion.....

36
37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do I have a
38 concurrence with the second.

39
40 MR. GERVAIS:WP18-45.

41
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I missed the second
43 on that one.(Pollock)

44
45 MR. VENT: I seconded his motion. That
46 was me.

47
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So the main
49 motion is withdrawn. The Chair will entertain a motion
50

1 to defer WP18-45 to the region, to the proponent.

2

3

MR. VENT: I make a motion.

4

5

MS. PELKOLA: Second.

6

7

8

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Motion by Darrel,
seconded by Jenny.

9

10

Further discussion.

11

12

Carl.

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MR. JOHNSON: I just wanted to
encourage the Council to have a good, clear statement.
There's been a lot of discussion as to the merits of
the proposal, but if you could clearly state on the
record the reason why specifically you're not taking
action and deferring it to the home region.

21

22

23

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CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'll state for the
record that although the idea of reducing the daily bag
limit to three from five has viable aspects it will not
work on the ground. The effect of the regulation will
not have what the Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional
Advisory Council is wanting.

28

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The effect would be best with an agenda
change request of three caribou limit in conjunction
with the Western Interior Regional Advisory Council and
Northwest Arctic Councils submitting that agenda change
request to the Board of Game, then submitting that as a
proposal so that the Board of Game changes it, then it
would be a redundancy into the system after that.

36

37

38

39

I want the record to be clear that I do
not feel that this proposal will have the effect that
the Northwest Arctic is desiring.

40

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Don.

MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair, I'm kind of
confused now. What exactly is the motion.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The motion is to
defer the proposal back to the region.

MR. HONEA: I call for the question.

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The question is
2 called. Those in favor of deferral of WP18-45 signify
3 by saying aye.

4
5 IN UNISON: Aye.

6
7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed, same sign.

8
9 (No opposing votes)

10
11 MR. THOMAS: Mr. Chairman. This guy
12 over here, what the heck is your name?

13
14 MR. JOHNSON: Carl.

15
16 MR. THOMAS: The effect I thought of
17 tabling something is just put it to the side, forget
18 about it. Now, what, you're saying that that isn't
19 what that tabling means?

20
21 MR. JOHNSON: Through the Chair.
22 Usually when you table an action item it is tabled to
23 be brought up again at a future meeting.

24
25 MR. THOMAS: That it could be.

26
27 MR. JOHNSON: Typically you --
28 procedurally you should.

29
30 MR. THOMAS: It's tabled. Okay, you
31 just didn't want to deal with this, so you sat it to
32 the side.

33
34 MR. GERVAIS: You've got to deal with
35 it later if you table it.

36
37 MR. JOHNSON: Mr. Chair. I'll just
38 point again for the record that the discussion that was
39 just stated was still a discussion as to why the
40 proposal should not be adopted, not why it should be
41 deferred. Just noting for the record. You were
42 addressing the merits of the value of the proposal.

43
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: My reason being is
45 that I'm not willing to fight for the proposal because
46 I think it's non-viable. I would like the record to
47 reflect that I would like a teleconference on this
48 issue to discuss what the main problem is and how to
49 best achieve the remedy to that problem. I need this

50

1 conference with these other Councils. That's what we
2 need. We want them to understand we need to be able to
3 talk to them so we all get on the same sheet of music
4 and we have the best effect with this proposal process.
5 It's fairly expensive to make these analyses and so
6 forth.

7
8 Tim.

9
10 MR. GERVAIS: Jack, maybe in the record
11 we could state that due to action taken earlier today
12 with trying to set up these caribou committees that
13 that's a better venue for dealing with this issue and
14 the topics surrounding it.

15
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. Exactly.

17
18 Ray.

19
20 MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman. You're
21 using the term I and I think you should say we because
22 that's kind of a consensus of our discussion in the
23 minutes that would say we.

24
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. I had a
26 mouse in my pocket.

27
28 (Laughter)

29
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Lisa.

31
32 MS. MAAS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That
33 concludes all the caribou proposals, so we can go back
34 to the order of all the other proposals. So that would
35 be WP18-21.

36
37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are they sequential
38 in this thing?

39
40 MS. MAAS: They should be in the order
41 that they're listed in the agenda. So 21 should be
42 after 18-35.

43
44 (Pause)

45
46 MS. MAAS: Are you ready, Mr. Chair?

47
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Lisa.

49
50

1 MS. MAAS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
2 Again, for the record, my name is Lisa Maas and will be
3 presenting a summary of the analysis for Wildlife
4 Proposal 18-21.
5

6 Wildlife Proposal 18-21 was submitted
7 by the Bristol Bay Subsistence Regional Advisory
8 Council and contains two request. First, that the
9 harvest restrictions for the Mulchatna Caribou Herd in
10 portions of Units 9, 17 and 19 be eliminated resulting
11 in a simple harvest limit of 2 caribou and, second, to
12 consolidate hunt areas. Specifically consolidation of
13 hunt areas in Units 19 and 9C were requested. However,
14 as no residents of the Western Interior Region have a
15 customary and traditional use determination for caribou
16 in Unit 9C, I will not present information about
17 changes to that unit unless requested by this Council.
18

19 The proponent states that removal of
20 the harvest restriction would provide greater harvest
21 opportunity to Federally qualified subsistence users
22 and would reduce regulatory complexity by aligning
23 Federal regulations with recent changes to State
24 regulations. Similarly, consolidation of hunt areas
25 with identical seasons and harvest limits would
26 simplify regulations.
27

28 Many changes to both State and Federal
29 caribou regulations have occurred in these units over
30 the past decade in response to caribou population
31 dynamics and efforts to maintain alignment between
32 Federal and State regulations, which includes this
33 proposal.
34

35 In 2016, the State Board of Game
36 eliminated caribou harvest restrictions in Units 9, 17
37 and 19, which this proposal also seeks to eliminate.
38

39 After peaking at 200,000 caribou in
40 1996, the Mulchatna Herd declined to a low of 18,000 in
41 2013. The most recent 2016 population estimate is
42 27,000 caribou, which is just below State management
43 objectives. The 2016 bull/cow ratio of 39 bulls per
44 100 cows was the highest ratio observed since 2000.
45

46 Caribou are an important subsistence
47 resource to local residents. Since 2000 reported
48 harvest has decreased in response to declines in the
49 Mulchatna Herd population. Reported harvest by local
50

1 hunters has averaged 430 caribou per year since 2000.
2 However, since 2013 reported harvest by local hunters
3 has only averaged 166 caribou per year, although
4 unreported harvest occurs to an unknown degree.

5
6 Adopting this proposal would reduce
7 regulatory complexity and user confusion by aligning
8 Federal and State regulations. It would have no effect
9 on the Mulchatna Caribou Herd or subsistence use as
10 State regulations already adopted these changes.
11 Consolidating hunt areas in Unit 19 would reduce
12 regulatory complexity by simplifying Federal
13 regulations and aligning them with State regulations.

14
15 The OSM preliminary conclusion is to
16 support WP18-21 with modification to retain language in
17 the Unit 19A and 19B regulation specifying that
18 residents of Lime Village are authorized to hunt under
19 an existing community hunt only as well as several
20 modifications regarding the Unit 9C hunt area request.

21
22 Again, my presentation excluded
23 information about requested changes to the Unit 9C hunt
24 area as these changes are complicated and would not
25 affect any Western Interior residents. Otherwise,
26 Council action on this proposal may want to exclude the
27 parts pertaining to Unit 9C.

28
29 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

30
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. Any
32 questions on the proposal.

33
34 MR. GERVAIS: Mr. Chair.

35
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.

37
38 MR. GERVAIS: What's the current
39 harvest limit.

40
41 It says change to two, but from what?

42
43 MS. MAAS: Through the Chair. It's
44 removing harvest restriction. Currently the harvest
45 limit is two caribou; however, no more than one caribou
46 may be a bull and no more than one caribou may be taken
47 August 1 to January 31st. So this proposal is removing
48 those restrictions about when only one caribou can be
49 taken and one caribou being a bull and just has a

50

1 simple harvest limit of two caribou.

2

3 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. Thank you.

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other questions
6 on the proposal.

7

8 (No comments)

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seeing none.

11

12 State comments.

13

14 MR. BUTLER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The
15 Department also supports this proposal. The Mulchatna
16 Herd is showing signs of increase. It's very difficult
17 to access this population. I think that's a really
18 important point to make. The current reported harvest
19 is less than 1 percent of the population size and we
20 think that's actually accurate based on our radio
21 tracking flights. It's largely occurring in areas that
22 are not inhabited by the human population. Southwest
23 Alaska has had very erratic snow cover, so winter
24 travel has been very difficult for people.

25

26 So again we believe that the harvest is
27 very minimal at this point. We have no conservation
28 concerns. Obviously the State has already adopted this
29 two caribou bag limit. We're currently meeting our
30 bull to cow ratio objective. As was noted, we are
31 below our population objective, but we see progress
32 moving in that direction on an annual basis. The herd
33 has really turned the corner from where it was. We
34 believe it's coming back.

35

36 I'd suggest it would be better to just
37 align all the regulations in 19A and B and just make it
38 all two caribou by permit using the State permit. I
39 think it would be most uniform for resource users and
40 provide as much subsistence opportunity as possible.

41

42 If you do want to get into Unit 9,
43 that's largely been a change in caribou herd
44 distribution and the way things are being managed. If
45 you're familiar with the Board of Game proposals, we
46 have a Board of Game proposal to try to clean that up
47 relative to changes in herd distribution that have
48 occurred since 1990.

49

50

1 So it's been a long time since the
2 Northern Alaska Peninsula Herd has move north of the
3 Naknek River into the northern portion of 9C. Largely
4 it's been occupied by the Mulchatna Herd since 2000.
5 So it's just saying it's treating the northern half of
6 9C as if it was part of the Mulchatna Herd range.

7
8 So we definitely support that. We're
9 going to see if we can't get it passed through the
10 Board of Game and that will be February before the
11 Federal Subsistence Board meets in April, so you'll
12 have that information and knowledge piece as you go
13 into the Federal Board of Game itself.

14
15 If there's any questions, I'd be happy
16 to answer them.

17
18 The other thing to note is that we do
19 have a predator control program that we've applied to
20 this population to bolster it. We're going to be
21 evaluating that this year. I think we're going to try
22 to refocus the control effort so that they affect the
23 calving areas more directly in the future. So we're
24 making changes. We're continuing to adapt our
25 management program essentially to provide future
26 opportunities.

27
28 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

29
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: These numbers are
31 current, this herd population of 27,000-something or do
32 you have numbers that are different than that, than
33 what OSM had, 27,240?

34
35 MR. BUTLER: I just had that
36 spreadsheet up. It's a joint Federal/State survey
37 that's being conducted, so we had the same numbers that
38 OSM has. Yeah, 27,242 is the current population
39 estimate and 22 calves per 100 cows, 39 bulls per 100
40 cows. Again, everything seems to be looking good. I
41 think it's just a matter of time before it increases
42 and hopefully continues to change its range as it
43 increases. I think you noted that, that as the
44 population increases it does change its range.

45
46 This herd from 1900 to 1980 was less
47 than 20,000 caribou, so we're above what it was for the
48 majority of the last century. For that period of time,
49 for 80 years plus, it only occupied the Mulchatna River
50

1 Drainage in 17B. As it increased, it expanded out,
2 started moving into Unit 18, 17C obviously, 17B, Unit 9
3 and Unit 19. So it started occupying a larger range.
4 Probably the Kilbuck Mountain Herd got consumed in that
5 expansion.

6
7 Now that it's at a smaller population
8 size, which again is still larger than it was for the
9 majority of the 1900s, it's still occupying a fair bit
10 of range. We think we have an eastern and a western
11 segment. We're monitoring them to see what's going to
12 happen, but both of them are largely inaccessible. The
13 western segment does get some harvest from Bethel
14 during years where it's good in the eastern Unit 18,
15 but it still seems to be a sustainable harvest for this
16 population.

17
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are they still
19 broken into two calving aggregates now? Is that what
20 you're referring to?

21
22 MR. BUTLER: That's correct, yeah.
23 They're certainly interchanging the radio collars
24 between the calving aggregations. One component we call
25 the northern component is typically in the southern
26 portion of Unit 19, so it wouldn't get all the way up
27 to the Kuskokwim and may not be noticeable to residents
28 of that unit, but they calve in the southern portion of
29 Unit 19 and then move back quickly into the Mulchatna
30 River Drainage in Unit 17 and Lake Clark area in Unit 9
31 before they head south. That segment typically winters
32 closer to Dillingham and Koliganek. You see those
33 villages.

34
35 And then there's another segment of the
36 population that we call the western segment that
37 typically starts in Unit 17 with its calving closer to
38 New Stuyahok, Koliganek, ironically, and then moves off
39 to the west towards Unit 18 into the Kilbuck Mountain
40 area. So we're watching both segments and seeing how
41 they compare, but it appears that they're still acting
42 as one herd due to interchange and things like that.

43
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I appreciate
45 all that biological information and background.

46
47 MR. GERVAIS: A question.

48
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: A question from Tim.

50

1 Go ahead.

2

3 MR. GERVAIS: What is the management
4 objective for the herd?

5

6 MR. BUTLER: We have several management
7 objectives, 30 to 80,000 I think is our population
8 objective, 35 bulls per 100 cows is our ratio objective
9 for males to females. We have objectives that go
10 beyond that in terms of trying to apply intensive
11 management and predator control. We like to see a
12 certain proportion of calves survive into the fall,
13 that sort of thing, to evaluate whether or not the
14 predator control is effective.

15

16 But our underlying objectives again:
17 minimum of 30,000 caribou, which we think we're
18 increasing towards that objective and with these
19 caribou herds some harvest is certainly appropriate and
20 doesn't affect progress towards those objectives, so we
21 feel pretty good about offering opportunity.

22

23 I think our current harvest is -- you
24 know, a typically reported harvest is about anywhere
25 from 100 to 200 caribou annually. We're estimating
26 that we could take 1,400 caribou. So it really is just
27 a fraction of even what is available for harvest. Less
28 than 1 percent in the typical year what's reported.
29 Again, despite all the concerns about reporting and
30 other things, it probably is real just because this
31 population is really withdrawn to areas that are very
32 inaccessible and hard to access.

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. We had big
35 concerns in Western Interior about that Mulchatna Herd
36 decline and the high harvest rates that occurred
37 previous to that on the bull component and the dismal
38 effect that had on the herd. I'm glad to see that the
39 herd bull/cow ratio has turned around and there's
40 larger bulls in the population.

41

42 Is there non-resident hunting
43 opportunity on Mulchatna?

44

45 MR. BUTLER: Not yet, Mr. Chair. It's
46 still being managed for resident harvest opportunity.

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'm real happy to
49 see this herd turning the corner. I think it can

50

1 support this harvest that the Board of Game has
2 provided and I'm supportive of aligning this Federal
3 hunt. I would like the Department to work with this
4 Council with providing herd status on an annual basis
5 if we can get that since we want to track what this
6 herd is actually doing.

7
8 MR. BUTLER: We'd be glad for the
9 opportunity, Mr. Chair.

10
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you.

12
13 Any further discussion with the State.

14
15 (No comments)

16
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seeing none. Thanks
18 so much, Lem. Federal manager discussion.

19
20 Bruce.

21
22 MR. SEPPI: Mr. Chair. Bruce Seppi,
23 Anchorage Field Office BLM. We would support the
24 proposal as written.

25
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you.

27
28 Park Service, Lake Clark, comment.

29
30 (No comments)

31
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seeing none.
33 Bristol Bay hasn't met yet.

34
35 Any written comments that you know of,
36 Zach?

37
38 MR. STEVENSON: None known at this
39 time, Mr. Chair.

40
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Advisory committee
42 comments.

43
44 (No comments)

45
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any public
47 testimony.

48
49 Anybody on the phone care to speak to
50

1 this proposal.

2

3 (No comments)

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Regional Council
6 recommendation.

7

8 The Chair will entertain a motion to
9 adopt Proposal WP18-21 with OSM modification.

10

11 MR. THOMAS: I'll so move.

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Moved by Dennis.

14

15 MS. MAAS: Just to clarify, since we
16 didn't really discuss the changes to Unit 9C if maybe
17 for the record you just say take no action on 9C or
18 somehow clarify that you're not supporting the entire
19 proposal since we didn't discuss the Unit 9C
20 regulations.

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The motion to adopt
23 the proposal excluding discussion on 9C for the record
24 to be clear. Dennis motioned to that effect. Do we
25 have a second.

26

27 MR. SIMON: Second.

28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seconded by Pollock.
30 Discussion on Proposal 18-21.

31

32 (No comments)

33

34 MR. VENT: Call the question.

35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The question is
37 called.....

38

39 MR. STEVENSON: Pardon me, Mr. Chair.
40 Just for point of clarification it may be helpful to
41 state the modification and the justification just so
42 that's clear for all parties.

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Where is the
45 modification? Oh, it's here. This is the discussion
46 on 19C.

47

48 Go ahead there, Carl.

49

50

1 MR. JOHNSON: I think the motion
2 referencing the OSM modification has on the record what
3 the modification is. What's lacking from the record is
4 the Council's rationale for adopting that proposal as
5 modified.

6
7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The presentation
8 basically excluded 19C, modifications of delineation of
9 where the North Peninsula Caribou Herd migrated and
10 including that portion of 9C, but that's outside of our
11 region. I don't want to muddy up the water with the
12 modification. I would prefer to stay with the OSM
13 modification. I agreed with their line of reasoning,
14 but it's out of my region. So I'm just supporting the
15 OSM modification, but we're not speaking to it
16 specifically.

17
18 Is that clear.

19
20 I don't think it's going to affect the
21 population for our region.

22
23 MR. JOHNSON: So what I'm hearing from
24 you, Mr. Chair, is that the rationale behind the OSM
25 preliminary conclusion you support that rationale.

26
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I do.

28
29 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

30
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I want to make the
32 record crystal clear.

33
34 MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman, you've got
35 a mouse again. It's we do.

36
37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. Well, he
38 asked me specifically. Any further discussion on the
39 proposal as modified.

40
41 (No comments)

42
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Somebody call the
44 question.

45
46 MS. PELKOLA: Question.

47
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Jenny called the
49 question. Those in favor of Proposal WP18-21 with OSM
50

1 modification signify by saying aye.

2

3 IN UNISON: Aye.

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed, same sign.

6

7 (No opposing votes)

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Proposal is adopted.

10 It's 4:55 so we're going to recess until tomorrow
11 morning and continue with our agenda.

12

13 We appreciate everybody being on the
14 phone with us and the Department of Fish and Game.

15

16 (Off record)

17

18 (PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA)
)ss.
STATE OF ALASKA)

I, Salena A. Hile, Notary Public in and for the
state of Alaska and reporter for Computer Matrix Court
Reporters, LLC, do hereby certify:

THAT the foregoing pages numbered ____ through
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WESTERN INTERIOR FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY
COUNCIL MEETING, VOLUME I taken electronically on the
10th day of October in Fairbanks, Alaska;

THAT the transcript is a true and
correct transcript requested to be transcribed and
thereafter transcribed by under my direction and
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THAT I am not an employee, attorney, or
party interested in any way in this action.

DATED at Anchorage, Alaska, this 18th
day of October 2017.

Salena A. Hile
Notary Public, State of Alaska
My Commission Expires: 09/16/18